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Christian Courier

A REFORMED WEEKLY

MAY 12, 1995/No. 2444

Buddhist refugee now a soldier for Christ

Vinh Le baptizing a man in his home village in Vietnam

James Kwantes

VANCOUVER — In the early 1980s Vinh Le was one of millions of refugees who fled Vietnam to escape the repressive Communist government. He escaped via a small boat with 17 other refugees.

Early this year he returned to his homeland as a Christian pastor and ministered to his family and other villagers in Dai Loc, the small town where he grew up. The trip back was Le's first and marked the first time in 15 years he had seen his mother, five sisters and two brothers.

Le's 1981 flight from Vietnam ended in a refugee camp in Thailand. Because he didn't have relatives in a third country like Canada or the United States, Thai officials planned to send him back to Vietnam. A friend invited him to join the Vietnamese army, a move that would guarantee him a steady income. Before accepting, however, Le wanted to learn more about politics and government.

Christian soldier

His quest for information led him to a small Protestant library in the camp. And at the library, Le read the Bible for the first time and eventually became a Christian.

"I receive comfort from the Lord," says Le. He says his past life as a Buddhist was characterized by no hope and no promise, he says. Christ gave him hope and a new life.

"I read Matt. 11:28: 'Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest,' and it had real meaning for me," says Le. "I didn't want to join the army anymore; I wanted to be a soldier of Christ."

Gift for ministry

Le began to witness to other refugees and actually felt sad when it was time to leave the camp. In 1984 he went to Indonesia for English training before coming to the U.S. He met his future wife, Esther, at a church in Indonesia where she was a children's director.

Vinh then moved to California where he was sponsored by a Vietnamese Christian Reformed church. Esther joined him half a year later. The pastor there told Le he had a gift for ministry and urged him to consider becoming a pastor.

"I thought I couldn't, but I prayed and studied English very hard," Le recalls. He spent 1986 studying in a Christian high school in Pella, Iowa. The following year, he enrolled in the Reformed Bible College in Grand Rapids, Mich., and was ordained as an evangelist in 1991. In 1994, he was ordained as a CRC minister after studies at Regent College in Vancouver.

Vancouver pastorate

Le is now the pastor of Faith and Action Vietnamese

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'Fire in the Rose' helps churches break cycle of abuse

Alan Doerksen

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — After a three-year pilot project, the Church Council on Justice and Corrections (CCJC) has launched "Fire in the Rose," a program designed to help churches break the cycle of violence and abuse occurring in relationships within and outside of the church.

"This is not a kit for churches that have a problem with abuse," clarifies Rev. James Scott, one of the project's three co-ordinators and a member of CCJC. He describes the program as "a resource kit to help congregations...begin to understand abuse." Its main purpose is "to help congregations explore the issues of violence and abuse in relationships with a view to working toward healing."

"Fire in the Rose" is a two-year program in which congregations can explore the nature and consequences of abuse, examine its roots, identify skills for new ways of living together, and work with the community to create and strengthen ministries of healing and prevention of abuse.

The program includes a series of nine booklets on topics such as how to recruit and prepare a committee to guide a church through the program; information on different forms of abuse, with personal stories to illustrate its impact on human lives; and ideas for individual and group activities focused on education, community-building and outreach.

CCJC's logo for Fire in the Rose

Difficult subject

The core program of "Fire in the Rose" starts with a four-month preparation period. This is followed by five stages, each of seven or eight weeks, with central themes grounded in biblical reflection. The program provides questions and prayer themes for each week for inclusion in Sunday bulletins.

"The subject matter is difficult to face," says Scott. "When it touches our own lives it can be deeply intimate and profoundly painful. Yet it is a critical and sacred journey for the church to undertake, one

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News

Pastor sets up mission projects in Vietnam

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Christian Reformed Church in Vancouver. The congregation worships each Sunday afternoon in First Vancouver CRC's building. The Le's, who were married in 1989 and have two young sons, Timothy and Titus, started the church in 1991 by going out and visiting and witnessing to people in the Vietnamese community.

"We taught them English and taught them about God," says Vinh. Since then, Le says, Christ has worked in the lives of many in the church. "Some people were involved in selling drugs, but they no longer do it."

Le can relate to these people because his life followed the same pattern. He says that as a young man he had led a bad life. But "when I accepted Jesus into my life in Thailand I had one thing in mind: to be a good Christian," says Le. "The Lord forgave my sin and made me a new person."

Le says many of the new Christians in the church have a hard time explaining their faith to family members in Vietnam, most of whom are Buddhist. Some are persecuted by their families who don't want them to go to a Christian church.

The transition from a life of poverty to affluent North American society creates other problems, says Le. One of these is possessiveness.

"They have nothing in Vietnam; they come here and see nice houses, fancy cars, VCRs and televisions," he says. "Many are still supporting families in Vietnam. They want to hang onto what they get. It's hard to teach them to give."

First CRC well

Le set up a variety of missionary projects on his recent visit to the Southeast Asian country. He preached in a Christian and Missionary Alliance church and had the opportunity to baptize five people from his home village. He has established two Bible and two English classes and showed residents of the poor village how to farm rabbit and eel. Le also helped build a well for the village.

Le hired six villagers to run the projects, two each for the Bible study, English classes and farm. He plans to return to Vietnam in a year to check on progress and to build two missionary homes.

"I hope to eventually send a missionary from the church to Vietnam," says Le, who is himself giving financial support to the mission work in Vietnam.

COURTESY VINH LE

Villagers construct the only well in the town of Dai Loc, Vietnam.

He recently started a drive for pledges from church members. "I don't know how it will turn out, but I'm praying and asking other people to pray also."

He says that unlike the situation in Russia, evangelizing in Vietnam is still illegal. But economic necessity is driving liberalization. Le says that if people from the village are building the structures and leading the English and Bible studies, the government looks the other way.

"The government needs money from the outside, and investment is coming in from Thailand, Singapore, Hong Kong and many other places," he explains. "They also need workers to know English for the tourists who are now coming."

Too many freedoms destructive

Le says that having lived under the Communists in Vietnam has made him appreciate the freedoms we enjoy in Canada. But too many freedoms can also be destructive, he says.

"People here want more and more freedom, but it is freedom to have abortions and freedom to have homosexual marriages," Le notes. He says people who think Canadian society does not offer enough freedom should live under the Communists for one month.

"I couldn't stay with the Communists: it was a very cruel, wicked government," says Le of his decision to flee Vietnam. His father was killed by the Communists in 1975. "They treat people like dogs."

Le, however, has managed to turn negative life experiences into positive work to further the gospel. On his recent trip to Vietnam he held two feasts in Da Nang city and village. Over 300 people attended and Le shared the gospel with them.

"There will be 80 million Vietnamese by the year 2000," says Le. "We pray to the Lord for the harvest there too."

Churches have role in healing abuse, says Scott

...continued from page 1

upon which God calls us to embark because as Christians we are to love and care for each other."

Abuse in our culture is "deeply rooted in the values, attitudes and beliefs that our society holds," says Scott. "Churches have a role to play in challenging the roots of abuse and in contributing to healthier families and communities."

Churches have contributed to abuse, says Scott, "but we have recognized that we also have a role to play in the healing." Abuse is a serious problem in society but is not more serious in the church, he says.

Co-operative project

"Fire in the Rose" is funded by Health Canada and the Donner Canadian Foundation. Scott calls the project "a unique co-operation between the government, the private sector and a church council."

The combined symbol of fire and rose is meant to represent the paradox of intimate relationships, which have the potential for both good and harm.

"The rose is often seen as a symbol of love, beauty and delicateness, yet it has the thorns that can pierce and tear," says Scott. "The fire is often seen as destructive, as powerful and out of control, yet the symbol of fire is also used to represent the presence of the Holy Spirit."

Pilot projects

The pilot project for "Fire in the Rose" ran from January 1993 to June 1994 and involved 14 churches from seven denominations. These included three churches in Nova Scotia, four in P.E.I., three in Ontario, one in Quebec and three in Saskatchewan. Since last June, CCJC has been analyzing the results of the pilot project and developing its new "Rose" program using ideas from the participating churches, says Scott.

In Toronto, Woodbine Heights Baptist Church took part in the pilot project. The theme of the project was "the church becoming a safe place," says Barbara Bishop, the church's pastor. "Each group in the church had set before it a certain educative task."

One spin-off project was a March break "peace camp" for children, which explored non-violence. This year's camp featured non-competitive games and guest speakers who told the children about street kids in Toronto and Brazil.

Wailing wall

The church also held a women's potluck supper in which women developed a "wailing wall for women" representing all the ways women have suffered, says Bishop. At the meeting, they explored the role of women in the Bible and reflected on their own experiences and feelings about their upbringing.

There was also a men's barbecue during which men reflected on and shared their experiences and coping strategies as men in today's world.

Commenting on the project's effects on her church, Bishop says, "We learned what it means to be a safe place for victims of abuse." She adds that another result of the project is "we had a whole new set of people join our community" — including some survivors of abuse.

Once the church receives the new "Fire in the Rose" materials, it plans to use them on an ongoing basis, says Bishop, who is also on the East York Coalition to Stop Violence Against Women and Children.

Power in the church

In Summerside, P.E.I., volunteers from four congregations visited local social service agencies, police patrols and medical centres to gain first-hand knowledge of how their community responds to violence. One Summerside church organized a series of public seminars looking at power in the church and family, and the abuse of power.

Beth Swaagman, abuse co-ordinator for the Christian Reformed Church in North America, says she likes the idea of the "Fire in the Rose" program. "I think the idea of having a two-year program is very important," she says. She also appreciates that it teaches different age groups within a church about abuse.

In her own work, Swaagman is now developing a handbook on policies and procedures for dealing with abuse for the CRC. It will be released this fall.

In June, Swaagman will be proposing two sets of guidelines on abuse to the annual CRC synod. One set will deal with how to handle abuse allegations filed by a child against a church leader; the other set will deal with allegations filed by an adult.

The "Fire in the Rose" program is available from CCJC for $79.

Family/ Society

My pastor's sermon changed my life

"The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray" (1 Peter4:7).

My wilful nature and a sermon by our pastor warning members of the congregation against leaving the mainstream to look for signs at places such as the Vineyard in Toronto sent me directly there to investigate.

Up to that point I had been avoiding the "Toronto Blessing." It sounded a bit too hokey for my Christian Reformed mind. I had friends who were quietly inviting me, but I always had a very good reason not to go. Yet while in church listening to a sermon which told me just what I wanted to hear, I suddenly felt defensive for my friends. How could my pastor warn against their Christian fellowship? I wanted to talk to him, but could I do this knowing nothing firsthand?

Felt at home

The very next Sunday, a friend once again invited me to the Vineyard. This time I jumped at the chance. That evening at the Toronto Vineyard the sermon happened to be very Reformed. The guest preacher told us we were living in the last times between the first and second coming of the Lord and we should be striving to make this world the place the Lord intended it to be. We should be working, not just waiting. My Christian Reformed mind felt right at home.

Then it was ministry time. The first ministry team that came to pray with me prayed that my eyes and ears would be opened. I agreed in prayer. The second team prayed that I receive the gift of intercession. I agreed after I figured out that intercession was Vineyard language for prayer. Then I felt very hot, fell to the carpet and began laughing the most joyful laughing I have ever experienced.

Prayed without ceasing

The week following I didn't want to stop praying. I would pray all day, wake after sleeping about an hour, and pray all night as well. After a week of that you can imagine my physical condition. As Marty's secretary, I was useless.

My ability to reason became next to nil. When I set out to pick up my daughter from a young people's meeting, I couldn't find the right house, so I ended up driving around all night praying for the world. It didn't actually occur to me that Marty and the kids would worry.

When I came home at 9:30 the next morning, I was surprised to see our driveway packed with cars and the living room filled with friends who had gathered to comfort Marty and pray that I would be found.

Sleep deprivation

A visit to the family doctor led me to the hospital and subsequently to the psychiatric ward where the doctors interviewed me, identified my condition as manic-depressive and put me on a suitable medication. After two weeks they sent me home with a year's prescription for lithium.

The week following, a Christian psychiatrist analyzed my situation. He took me off the lithium and recommended adequate rest: he explained that sleep deprivation leads to delusions.

Basically, after a week without much sleep, I had lost touch with the concrete world.

Now I spend my nights sleeping; and during the day I pray... "clear-minded and self-controlled."

Marian den Boer lives with her husband and five children in Hamilton, Ont. She is very thankful to all the readers who prayed for her during this episode. Your prayers definitely helped her back on track.

Intergenerations
Under 30
Careers
Family
Seniors

Walking through the Vietnam War Memorial: a reflection

Agnes Kramer-Hamstra

Editor's Note: The end of April 1995 marks the 20th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War. Canada immediately opened up diplomatic relations with Vietnam. The U.S. has yet to do this. Many Americans dodged the draft by coming to Canada. This war left many wounds on the heart of America, both nationally and internationally. Agnes and her family recently visited the Vietnam War Memorial during a trip to Washington, D.C.

Over a rise, it appears as a gash in the ground, this memorial to all the military personnel who died in Vietnam. "The Wall" begins at street level: one name cut into the wedge of black granite which slices into the earth. As the path slopes down, the wall of names moves up, knee deep, shoulder high, then overhead. The names multiply, line by line, day by day, from 1959 to 1975: some 58,000 of them.

The list of names begins and ends at the vertex of two angled, joined walls, where the walls are highest, or deepest: an endless litany: "Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord; O Lord, hear my voice. Let your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy."

I touch a name, feel its shape etched in the black granite. Reflected in the high polish of the stone, I see my face. Each name, a face. Each name, a birth. Each name a brother, sister, father, lover, friend, son, daughter. Each one, a creature born to be another thread in the purposefully weaving fingers of the Almighty. And the places they filled are no more. Each place implodes into a name etched into stone, into the memory of their people, into the memory of God, in whom they had their being.

Memorials are about death, and yet they usually make you look up. This one leads me down. The gash that is death is ignored by most memorials, and so what you see as you look up at them becomes a cacophony: birds, clouds in flight, proud flags waving. This memorial leads me down. The stone's finish absorbs my footsteps. Down into the silence that death brings: into an understanding of what war does and is, by its very nature.

Designer Maya Ying Lin's memorial is eloquent and powerful, a reflection on not only the Vietnam war, but on the cost of all armed combat.

Agnes Kramer-Hamstra is a freelance writer who lives in London, Ont.

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Editorial

Violence begets Oklahoma anguish

It appears that there is a direct connection between the bombing of a government building in Oklahoma City and extreme right-wing gun cults in the U.S. The far right is strongly opposed to centralized government in general and to gun control in particular. Those who planted the bomb are, in all likelihood, the fanatical fringe of the far right. In fact, many Americans who have an affiliation with militias or other right-wing groups are distancing themselves from the Oklahoma City terrorists.

But it may be too glib on their part to pretend there's no connection between the paranoiac rhetoric they've been spouting and the actual implementation of that rhetoric. A lot of radio talk hosts have been pretty inflammatory in their denouncements of liberals and the White House. When convicted Watergate burglar G. Gordon Liddy acknowledges that he has been using figures labeled "Bill" and "Hillary" for target practice because he thinks that disarming Americans is "a lethal idea", you have to wonder what message his target shooting sends. The very fact that Americans undergo military training for possible revolutionary purposes cannot be taken lightly either.

But going even further, is there not a connection between the violence that America unleashed in Vietnam, which former U.S. defence secretary Robert McNamara now proclaims as a sad mistake in his book *The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam*, and the mentality that produces an Oklahoma bomber? Writes McNamara: "We do not have the God-given right to shape every nation in our own image as we choose." In the U.S. shaping others in one's own image is often done at the point of a gun; at least, if you're proud and impatient.

Americans need not assume a collective guilt complex about what happened in Oklahoma City. To a certain extent it must be emphasized that this was the work of fanatics. But it would be entirely appropriate if Americans would examine their collective psyche, their history and their culture, and ask themselves how this preoccupation with guns can be stopped. How can they promote the ways of peace?

A few centuries ago Jesus stood in Gethsemane facing a mob armed with swords and clubs. When one of Jesus' companions wielded one of two swords, which Jesus earlier had said was enough protection, Jesus rebuked him and said, "Put your sword back in its place, for all who draw the sword will die by the sword." That was a form of gun control.

Those words still echo down the centuries. "Put your guns back in their place," America.

BW

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Spanking should not be outlawed

A lot of Canadians, with the obvious exception of MP Svend Robinson, are heaving a sigh of relief after London, Ont., Judge John Menzes dismissed an assault charge against David Peterson of Illinois. Peterson had spanked his five-year-old daughter in a London restaurant parking lot after she had pushed her two-year-old brother out of the car and wilfully slammed the door on his fingers. The spanking was witnessed by a London woman, who called the police. The police laid charges and held the father in jail for a night. A doctor certified a few hours later that the spanking had left no bruises.

The judge ruled that as long as a spanking is not abusive and is intended to correct a child, it is not illegal. The judge added that although Mr. Peterson may have been agitated or angry, it's unreasonable to expect a parent to carry out punishment "in a state of detached calm."

This ruling and the statement later by Justice Minister Allan Rock that the federal government does not intend to change the Criminal Code to outlaw spanking should be seen as a positive development. "The state makes a lousy parent," a commentator remarked. How true. Perish the thought that the government should decide how a child can be raised.

There are, of course, different schools of thought on the value of spanking. Some parents and psychologists believe that there are better ways of correcting a child's behavior. They may withold privileges or isolate the child for a brief period. But the assumption here is that emotional pain is humane and physical pain is cruel.

We would question that assumption. Cruelty is not dependent on whether the punishment is emotional or physical, but on whether it is unreasonable, unloving or unfair. One could argue that physical pain is a lot cleaner and lasts a much shorter time. It also demonstrates better that the parent can get upset and is not aloof.

A deserved spanking does not damage a child. We doubt whether spanking has ever caused a child to end up in jail. Abuse has done that, as has neglect. Courts should prosecute parents who abuse or neglect their children.

A healthy fear

From a psychological point of view the manner in which David Peterson carried out his daughter's punishment was not wise. To lay her on the trunk of the car, bare her bottom and spank her in public must be seen as humiliating to the five-year-old and insensitive on the part of the father. A less dramatic and public spanking would have been better.

I have a hunch that there is a connection between the way children are corrected and the way they learn to see God and human authority figures. Spanking may be more helpful in producing a healthy fear of the Lord (who also can get angry and does punish those he loves) than the ever kind and patient words of a "non-violent" parent who has been brainwashed into thinking that physical punishment constitutes a violation of the child's body and personhood.

BW

Letters

Technology has improved our life

I often agree with Mr. Hielema's sentiments, including some expressed in his April 28 article "Is globalization globaloney?" But I disagree with his view on jobs and workers. One of Mr. Hielema's basic points was that current "globalization" and "efficiencies" found in technology displaces workers, forcing them to compete at lower and lower wages for fewer and fewer jobs. This interpretation defies the unarguable lessons of economic history; new higher paying jobs are created with improvements in technology and efficiency.

Life 100, 200 or 300 years ago was not the idyllic, moral, family-centred life portrayed on the television show "Little House on the Prairie." Most people were illiterate and unable to read a Bible. Per capita alcohol consumption in the U.S. 100 years ago was triple today's rate. Infant mortality was far higher, many mothers died in childbirth, tough winters brought starvation and health problems and people were old at age 40.

There have certainly been a number of periods in the last 200 to 300 years when unemployment climbed and incomes dropped. But the long-term trend is absolutely clear. Incomes, wealth, living standards, life expectancies and health have, without exception, increased. And the increase in life expectancy has accelerated dramatically in the last 10 years. The main reason for these improvements is increased wealth because of increased efficiencies.

Bread costs a buck

Consider that 300 years ago, 97 per cent of the population had to live and work on farms to generate enough surplus to feed the three per cent of populations living in cities. Today, less than three per cent of the work force is needed in agriculture to feed the entire population and create surpluses for export.

At the turn of the century, one of every two workers was employed in agriculture. Because jobs were lost, and efficiencies increased, a loaf of bread is $1 today. If bread cost the same proportion of our income today as at the turn of the century, economists estimate a cost of $25. And while the preservatives in today's bread may give us cancer after 80 years, this is superior to dying at age seven from ingesting fungus or mold.

While it is easy to show where the jobs are lost, it is not easy to see where the new employment will be. But one thing is clear, if people have money, it will be spent. That's $24 dollars not spent on bread today, but now spent on a compact disc, in-line roller skates or a computer program, items the farmers in 1900 never dreamed their grandchildren would use or make a living producing.

Better off

I am not suggesting that everything in the world is better today than it was, and that there are no new problems. Yes, there are ecological, moral and justice issues requiring our prayer and effort. However, on balance, any realist will agree that overall we are better off.

Finally, it is true that, inflation adjusted, in average incomes have declined the last 10 years by one and two per cent (if you believe the Consumer Price Index is an accurate measure) after many decades of significant increases. It is possible, although unlikely, that globalization is part of the explanation. But if one looks at the doubling and tripling of real incomes in many parts of the Third World in the last 10 years due in part to globalization, it is a tiny price any caring Christian in Canada would be happy to pay.

Clarence Bick
Ancaster, Ont.

P.S.: Does Mr. Hielema realize that utilizing new technologies to grow food and harness renewable energy at home puts poor farmers and Hydro employees out of work?

Thanks for the memories

I was surprised and pleased to see the 50th anniversary Rearview Mirror picture in the April 14 issue. I very well remember that this picture was taken.

It was a massed choir of about 100 voices, with Mr. Henry Uitvlugt as director and Mr. Gerrit Kamphuis as organist.

I myself was a member of that choir and certainly recognize several of the people shown in this picture. Front row, left to right: Susan Prinsen (Tiemstra), Rita Haarsma (Tuininga), Ina DeBree (Bartel), myself, Marina Eerkes (Huibers) and Jenny VanOosterom (Huibers). In the back row I recognize Ike Eerkes and Ken Boer. Thank you for printing this picture. It brought back a lot of wonderful memories.

Joan Rosendal (Fernhout)
Edmonton, Alta.

Don't box him in!

If many people are blessed by the Vineyard Church, how are we to say it is not of the Lord? Our Lord works in mysterious ways. He can do everything.

Don't put Christ in "our" box. We can never figure out his ways. Praise him from whom all blessings flow.

Truus Kuyvenhoven
Norval, Ont.

50th Anniversary Rearview Mirror

In the Jan. 29, 1960, issue of Calvinist Contact *we found this brief report of an Ottawa school meeting. It's interesting to note how the times have changed. Rev. De Jager worries about the moral improvement philosophy of the public school. That goal of moral improvement has not been reached. In fact, today we wish there would be a morality emphasis in the public school, where in most cases the Lord's Prayer is no longer prayed. Another point of interest is what De Jager said about the connection between the promise at baptism and the Christian school. That ties in with two recent editorials in* Christian Courier, *doesn't it?*

Calvinist Contact January, 1960

SCHOOLNIEUWS

De Ottawa Christian School is nog niet zo ver, dat aan de opbouw van een school kan worden begonnen, maar ze kan wel een goede jaarvergadering houden. Dat bleek wel dezer dagen in de nieuwe Christian Reformed Church aan de Merivale Road. Het is nog een jonge vereniging, nauwelijks twee jaar oud, en in het gezelschap van de Brockville League of the Christian School Alliance zal ze zich mischien wel een beetje verloren voelen: zo'n schoolvereniging zonder school, zonder schoolkinderen. Want om die kinderen gaat het immers.

De kinderen opvoeden in de geest van Jezus Christus — dat is het grote doel van de Christelijke school, zei rev. A. De Jager, van Brockville, die de jaarvergadering toesprak. In het public school systeem is voor Christus als de Verlosser geen plaats, ook al wordt daar het Onze Vader gebeden. De hele gedachte achter dit onderwijssysteem is, dat het onderwijs moet dienen tot morele verbetering van de mens. Een bekend thema: bouw scholen en breek de gevangenissen dan maar af. Er zijn sedertdien echter heel wat gevangenissen bijgebouwd!

Onderwijs kan nooit op zichzelf de mens verbeteren, de mens verlossen uit de ban der zonde. Dat kan Jezus Christus alleen. Laten ouders alsjeblieft niet gaan speculeren door te zeggen: Mijn kind kan "er" ook wel komen als het naar de public school gaat. Laten zij zich niet onttrekken aan de plicht om hun kinderen het beste onderwijs te geven wat zij kunnen krijgen op een leeftijd, dat zij daarvoor het meest ontvankelijk zijn. De Christelijke school is een prachtig hulpmiddel om de doopbelofte — "onderwijzen en te doén onderwijzen" — in een daad om te zetten. Opdat er na ons een krachtig geslacht de fakkel van het geloof overneme! aldus rev. De Jager.

Schoolnews

The Ottawa Christian school has not advanced far enough that a school can be built, but it can hold a good annual meeting. That became evident at the Christian Reformed Church on Merivale Road. It's still a young society, barely two years old. It probably feels a bit lost in the company of the Brockville League of the Christian School Alliance. Imagine: a school society without a school and without schoolchildren. After all, those children is what it's all about, isn't it?

Nurturing children in the Spirit of Jesus Christ — that is the great goal of the Christian school, according to Rev. Anthony De Jager, who addressed the annual meetihg. There is no place for Christ as Redeemer in the public school system, even if they do pray the Lord's Prayer. The whole idea behind this educational system is that education must serve the moral improvement of humanity. It's a familiar theme: build schools and break down jails. But since that slogan has been in exitence quite a few jails have been built!

Education by itself can never improve a human being or rescue a human being from the shackles of sin. Only Jesus Christ can do that. Let parents not speculate by saying: "My child will get "there" when it attends the public school." Let them not withdraw from the duty to give their children the best education they can get at an age they are most receptive to it.

The Christian school is a beautiful aid to translate the pledge at baptism "to instruct and to cause to be instructed" into a deed. May a strong generation after us take over the torch of faith! said De Jager.

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Opinion

'The Psalms meant so much to me in the camp'

Dirk van Genderen (translated by Bert Witvoet)

Jan Post was 17 when he was arrested by the Nazis. "I was subjected to a very cunning form of questioning. Once a security agent snarled (in German): 'It's always those Reformed people.' He collided with the faith, but faith gave me strength to remain standing. In the camp I always prayed before eating, even if we got almost nothing. I believed that Almighty God could bless even that. He got me through the war."Recently Post talked on the radio program "De Verandering" about the war, and especially about what faith meant to him in those years.

COURTESY DIRK VAN GENDEREN

Jan Post, nephew of Johannes Post, treasures his Dachau plates

Farm raid

In June of 1943 the raid on the Post farm took place. There were six people hiding in the house, among them four Jews.

"The evening before the raid I had a bit of a quarrel with my dad," says Jan Post. "I thought we could not continue any longer with that many fugitives in the house."

"'And who should we send away?' my dad asked. 'Should I hand them over to the security police?' That evening we prayed together for light and wisdom from the Lord. After that we were together yet for three hours. I saw my dad for the last time that evening."

The raid on the Post farm had been set up big. "There was an exchange of gunfire: father Marinus Post and two fugitves were armed. Two students, a Jew, and my dad were able to escape. Mother, three Jewish fugitives and I were taken; the rest of the children were left behind. Shortly after the raid, the Nazis burned the farm.

Jan Post and his mother were first taken to Arnhem, and in Sept. 1943 to Vught. On May 24, 1944, Jan arrived in Dachau. He picks up two plates from Dachau. "These are original plates from the BMW factories. We in the camp had to work in those factories. After the liberation I managed to take along a pair. I had them painted later. On the one plate you see the cross and the swastika, with the text from Ps.91:1 ('He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High, will rest in the shadow of the Almighty'). "The cross was victorious over the swastika," says Post.

On the other plate there are folded hands with the words, "The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective." "My dad had written those words in a letter I received from him in the camp. I got a lot out of the Bible during the war," says Post. "I did not know whether I would survive the war, but I could surrender my life to the Lord."

Father shot

Although Jan's dad was sought by the Nazis, he continued his resistance work in the west of Holland. With his brother, the well-known Johannes Post, he did a lot for the Resistance.

He was picked up in the fall of 1944, not as Marinus Post, but under his assumed name, Hubertus Cornelis Ham. Under that name he was later executed. As reprisal for one or other happening in Alkmaar, five men were taken from their cells and shot. "I didn't hear about that until I was liberated at Dachau," says Post.

Jan Post pulls out a piece of writing from his mother about her stay in the camps and her liberation. She was first in Vught, after that in Ravensbruck and later in the Giessen-Munchen camp near Dachau.

"About a week before the liberation we were forced to walk towards Innsbruck," she writes. "Between the mountains there is a huge valley. The Nazis intended to gather all the prisoners from the surrounding concentration camps there. They wanted to fill the valley with water so that all of us would drown. They wanted to remove all traces of all concentration camps. It did not happen because we were too tired to reach the valley and because the Nazis were no longer receiving guidance from higher-ups. A week later we were liberated by the Canadians."

After the war, Jan Post went into business. He often traded with Germans. "My attitude towards the Germans was quite normal. If you could not forgive them for what they had done you would choke on it. But I could do that from out of my faith. After the war they were no longer our enemies."

Jan Post sees his wartime survival as a miracle and "also as a mandate from the Lord to be busy on his behalf." Until recently he was elder in the Dutch Reformed (Nederlands Gereformeerd) church in Kampen and active for the RPF (a Reformed political party). Since a few years ago he has been engaged in helping people in Romania get on better financial footing.

True remembrance

As far as Jan Post is concerned, the liberation does not need to be celebrated every year after this special year. That could be done once in five or 10 years, he thinks. "It should be a real remembrance. I feel the same way about remembering the dead. If you remember every year what happened in Dachau, that's just an exercise in repetition. If you rake that up every year then you eventually wouldn't be able to stand Germans anymore."

Neither right nor left

John Hiemstra

I have been labelled both a "conservative" and a "socialist" in the past two months. Neither tag was intended as a compliment. I suspect both labels were meant to signal to the different audiences that they could ignore my words without further thought.

Labels can be good and useful. A basement jar labelled "strawberry jam" offers us mouth-watering prospects. Calling Jean Chrétien "Prime Minister" tells us that he holds a powerful office. Party labels like "Liberal," "Conservative," or "Reform" tell voters important information about these political parties.

But if political labels are used to prematurely discredit or dispose of someone's ideas, they become a form of gossip and slander. This weakens and splits the Christian community (2 Cor. 12:20).

The ill-effects of political labelling go far beyond gossip, however. When Christians use "conservative and socialist" or "right and left" to develop their political insights, they unexpectedly import secular political ideas. The content of these labels reflects the thinking of the French Revolution and its slogan "No God, no master."

Evolution of 'left' and 'right'

Pre-modern use of "left" and "right" reflected biblical passages like: "The heart of the wise inclines to the right, the heart of the fool to the left" (Ec. 10:2). In Matt. 25:33, "right" is the place of God's favor while "left" indicates disfavor. In the 17th century, this meaning of left and right shaped the use of these terms in the English Parliament. The party to the right of the Speaker of the House of Commons was in the King's favor (or confidence), while the party to the left was out of favor. When the "right" party fell out of favor, it switched to the left of the Speaker and the other party moved to the right.

Notice that right and left did not say anything about what the parties actually stood for. Only during the French Revolution (1789) did right and left take on their own political meanings.

In the revolutionary Parlement of France parties were labelled "right" when they wanted to "converse" the "regressive" historical institutions of the past, such as the absolute monarchy, the advantaged nobility and the privileged hierarchical church.

Other parties were deemed "left" because they wanted to ensure "progress" through enlightened reason. "Popular sovereignty" was the way to define true policy, and thus the "left" wanted to abolish all ancient and elitist institutions.

From this time on, labelling someone right or left meant they held "regressive" or "progressive" views. Today this usually means the "right" wants less government and more market freedom and the "left" wants more government and restrictions on market freedoms. Although the right and left viciously disagree on these means, they fully agree that politics and/or economics can achieve the secular goal of "happiness on earth."

Biblical categories

Using "right" and "left" in the Christian community imposes these secular categories on brothers and sisters. When we import these categories we also import their implied solutions. That allows the secular mind that defined these labels to ultimately win our debates.

I don't want to suggest that there should be no debate in the Christian community. To the contrary! But, our political debates must be oriented around biblical categories. The Bible talks about belief and unbelief, justice and oppression, stewardship and exploitation, not more or less government or more or less market. Thus, Christians need to work with categories like "just" government and "stewardly" market activity.

John Hiemstra teaches political science at The King's University College, Edmonton.

Scottish film epic romantic but earthy

Media/Arts

Rob Roy

Rated AA
Stars Liam Neeson, Jessica Lange, John Hurt, Tim Roth, Eric Stolz
Written by Alan Sharp
Directed by Michael Caton-Jones

Marian Van Til

Robert Roy MacGregor was the head of a Scottish clan of a few hundred people in the early 18th century. His reputation was secure among his kinspeople and other fellow Scots: he was a natural and fearless leader, proud, fiercely loyal, and a man of integrity to whom honor was virtually as important as breathing. His foppish English overlords saw him differently. They had little use for such pride (they'd call it "cheek,"), or for a man who would risk death to protect his kin, or cattle and other property. Such a man didn't take well to subjugation. (See sidebar about English/Scottish history.)

Romantic novelist Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832) brought MacGregor's story to the world at large in the epic whose title was taken for this film. Rob Roy's story has become a legend somewhat along the lines of Robin Hood. MacGregor was a hero to the Scots, an outlaw to the English. Whether all these events are historically accurate or not is not really the point.

This film greatly benefits from Scottish screenwriter Alan Sharp's understanding of his country's history, his ability to tell a good (romanticized) story, and his keen ear for intelligent, almost Shakespearian dialogue. Add to that a Scottish director, Michael Caton-Jones, the astonishing, rugged beauty of the Scottish Highlands, and superb acting by everyone involved and you have the recipe for a classic film, if not a true epic.

Jessica and Liam Neeson as Mary and Robert Roy MacGregor

Australian native Liam Neeson brings authenticity, authority and intensity to Rob Roy; American Jessica Lange (without makeup) brings a steely, courageous edge (and a passable accent) to Rob's wife, Mary. Englishmen John Hurt and Tim Roth play the villains. The veteran Hurt lends a semblance of dignity and humanity to the haughty aristocrat, the Marquis of Montrose, English landlord of the MacGregor clan. Roth is totally convincing as Montrose's nasty, pampered nephew, appropriately named Cunningham. The character is a lace-embalmed pretty boy until he handles a sword, when his amoral nature combines with unsuspected athleticism to make him a deadly foe.

An attempt to be free

The story takes place in the Highlands; the time is near the end of centuries of periodic armed strife between the dominating English and the seemingly indominatable Scots. Few Highlanders own their land and must pay exhorbitant rents to their English overseers. The ambitious MacGregor does have land — 300 acres of it where he raises cattle, the proceeds of which mostly go to the Marquis.

MacGregor reasons that because he knows cattle so well, if he had 1000¢ to buy more, and drive them across the Highlands and sell them, he could make an excellent living. He audaciously asks the Marquis for the money and agrees to pay it back in three months. Intrigued by the man's effrontery, Montrose agrees.

But Cunningham observes the deal and devises his own treachery to thwart MacGregor's attempts at independence. Whether it's ruining a man and his family, living off his uncle's fortune, or bedding and leaving a servant girl, it's all sport to him.

Earthiness won't appeal to everyone

Despite one terrible setback after another, we're pretty sure *Rob Roy* will end happily — this is, after all, a romance, in both the literary and personal sense. There are two love affairs here: one between a people and their land (not hard to understand when one sees the people and the land), and one between a "fine man," as the Scots would say, and his "fine wife."

The steadfast love between Rob Roy and Mary MacGregor provides the anchoring thread upon which the weave of the story depends.

Not everyone will like this film. If you haven't read any Shakespeare in a while, or ever, *Rob Roy's* similar earthiness may take you aback. An antiseptic film with sweet-scented Hollywood images it's not. These are, after all, peasants; and indoor plumbing is centuries away. One can almost smell the sweat of unwashed bodies. There are also fully clothed allusions to (married) sex, a rape, and urination. There's even a (very old) joke about why Calvinists don't "do it" standing up. (Because it might lead to dancing.) It may take a bit, too, to become accustomed to the heavily accented English; and some viewers will find the film too long.

However, all of that adds authenticity to *Rob Roy's* achievement as a well-acted, beautifully filmed, and, at times, stirring tale of the love of a man and woman, and a man and his people's fight against injustice.

The Scots couldn't fight 'em so eventually joined 'em

Marian Van Til

Rob Roy MacGregor's life spanned the turbulent late 17th century and early 18th century (1671-1734) in Scotland. The clans, which went back to the 9th century, were disintegrating, drastically altering a way of life and plunging many into poverty and life-long indenture to English landlords.

History of ire

The history of Scots-English antagonisms is traceable to the 11th century. Such animosities were based on periodic English attempts to annex and control Scotland, to which later were added differences over religion and loyalties to the various royal families (the Stuarts were Scots, the Tudors, English, and the Hanovers, German).

The history is complicated and evoked potent biases on each side: Mary, Queen of Scots, a Catholic, was forced, just before she was beheaded in 1567, to hand over the throne to her son James VI. He became a Protestant and was known as James I of England, ruling England and Scotland as a united kingdom.

He was then succeeded by his son Charles I, who was beheaded by Cromwell and Friends.

Queen Anne, the last Stuart monarch, died in 1714, after which George I, formerly the Elector of Hannover, took the throne, beginning the Hanover (English spelling) line.

The English under Cromwell (1642) continued their oppressive grip on Scotland via excessive rents and taxation and armed suppression of "rebels." (The word "scot" itself came to be synonymous with tax. Our term "scot-free" — to escape unharmed or without penalty—, literally means "free from scot," i.e., untaxed.)

Rise of the Jacobites

Many Highland Scots remained loyal to the Stuarts, becoming known as the Jacobites after their leader James Edward Stuart, the only son of James II of England. The Jacobites were bitterly (and violently) opposed by the English.

A year after Anne died, the Jacobites led a rebellion to try to restore the throne to the Stuarts. The rebels were crushed and James fled to France.

Thirty years later they tried again, led by James' son Charles Edward Stuart ("Bonnie Prince Charlie"). Charles' forces easily defeated the English troops in Scotland and then marched on to England. A year later (1746) English troops battled Charles' army at Culloden Moor and defeated him. Charles, like his father had, fled to France.

In retribution for daring to rebel, the English executed many clan chiefs, disarmed the Highlanders and even outlawed kilts and bagpipes. These restrictions weren't lifted until almost 40 years later, after any threat from the Jacobites was gone. From then on, England and Scotland have been ruled by one monarch, Scotland has no parliament of its own, and the histories of the two countries since then have been intertwined.

A few years ago the Scots voted on whether to become independent; they declined the opportunity.

Church

Islamic government in Sudan orders churches to register

Barbara Baker

YAMBIO, Sudan (NNI) — The Sudan government's publicized repeal last October of a restrictive 1962 law against local Christian churches is nothing more than camouflage for its latest efforts to impose more state control over non-Muslim institutions, according to Sudanese Christians interviewed by NNI in southern Sudan.

Under new legislative changes instituted by Sudan's National Islamic Front government, all churches have received notification that they must register as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) by June or shut down operations.

For more than two decades, the complicated 1962 legislation, known as the Missionary Societies Act, had imposed strict controls over all church activities. According to local Christians, the National Islamic Front has used the legislation to promote the forced Islamization of Sudan.

Christians have long opposed the law. Official proclamations by the Sudan Council of Churches (SCC) called the legislation "offensive." And during his February 1993 visit to the Sudan, Pope John Paul II publicly requested that the heavy-handed law be removed.

In October 1994, at the end of the government-staged Inter-religious Dialogue Conference in Khartoum, President Omar Hasan al-Bashir announced with great fanfare that his government had finally repealed the controversial act.

From frying pan to fire

But according to Sudanese church leaders, the net effect of al-Bashir's October 4 order was to place control of churches under the Societies Registration Act of 1957 — a measure which Christians described to NNI as "an even more repressive document." For the first time, associations of both academic and religious nature are included within the scope of the registration, and all churches in Sudan are re-classified as voluntary NGOs. All churches have been instructed to re-register under that new status within six months or consider themselves dissolved, with their assets liquidated like those of a commercial company.

In March, Sudan's Justice Minister Abdelaziz Shiddo denied at the UN Human Rights Commission meetings in Geneva that the 1962 law had been replaced. "In fact, there is no such new law," Shiddo asserted in a March 3 speech responding to criticism of the new legislative changes.

Shiddo denounced Sudanese Bishop Macram Max Gassis for making such allegations, insisting that "it would not be conceivable to repeal that act and replace it by a more restrictive law." Shiddo neglected to admit that instead of enacting a new law, his government had simply revived an older measure.

Nonetheless, reliable sources within the SCC confirmed to NNI that between December and early January, all churches had received official government letters ordering them to re-register with the Registrar of Societies in the Ministry of Social Planning, as required by the 1957 law.

Must comply, says government

Under the stipulations of this act, the Minister of Social Planning has unconditional authority to accept or reject all applications for registration, as well as to cancel any registered church's status. Dissolution of the church would become effective within 90 days of registration refusal.

Churches were also required to supply annual lists of their executive officers, financial accounts, audits and minutes of their official meetings. It was not clear whether similar requirements would be expected from Muslim mosques and sects.

Upon study of the new requirements, most churches decided individually not to comply. Subsequently, the SCC has sent a collective response from all churches to the government, stating that they refused to register as ordered.

"Basically, what they said is that the churches were not accountable to the government," one Sudan observer told NNI.

For security reasons, the SCC's refusal letter has not been made public. To date, the SCC has received no government response to its written refusal.

Measure backfires

According to Bishop Paride Taban, Roman Catholic prelate of the Diocese of Torit in Eastern Equatoria, the 1957 act is already being implemented in the predominantly Arab Muslim north of Sudan, as well as in the areas of the Christian/animist south under government control.

But that fact did not seem to discourage the slight, graying bishop. "In this way, they are strengthening Christianity," he told NNI.

Recalling the spread of the Sudanese church in the south during the years just after passage of the 1962 law, the bishop seemed confident that re-imposing the 1957 act would have a similar effect.

The bishop admitted that Christians have already been under intense persecution. "Many Christians have lost their lives in Juba, in Torit and other places. If they don't close their mouths, they will disappear," Taban said.

"Yes, [the 1957 measure is] more strict than the 1962 law," he added. But he emphasized his belief that the Islamic regime's own repressive laws will backfire and become a catalyst to turn even more Sudanese to Christianity.

Barbara Baker was recently on assignment in Sudan for News Network International (NNI).

Dutch Reformed church accepts homosexual practice

Translated from *Kerk-informatie*, May 1995

LEUSDEN, Neth. — In March, under much public scrutiny, the 1995 Synod of the Reformed Church of the Netherlands (Hervormde) decided to reverse its November 1994 decision and declare that homosexuals, in both orientation and practice, should be fully accepted into the church.

Last November the synod decided to urge congregations which have conscientious objections against homosexuals participating at the Lord's Supper to temporarily refer either the homosexual person or the person with the objections to another congregation. The intent was to prevent disciplinary measures and to create a safe environment in which a discussion about homosexuality could be conducted.

This decision created a storm of protest. The secretariat of synod received 413 written reactions from individual church members, councils and classes. The church councils often included lists of names. The great majority of writers expressed disappointment, confusion and indignance. Only eight letters proposed that the church discipline [practicing] homosexuals.

The discussion at synod started with an unusual agenda proposal from Rev. A.J. Wilzing of the Hague. He asked for a minute of silence out of shame for the November decision. He wanted the synod to immediately take a new decision. His proposal was defeated.

Uncertainty

The synod's executive proposed declaring that homosexual church members should no longer be kept in uncertainty about their position in the Reformed Church and should be accepted. Synod leaders hoped the body would approve their proposal.

But Rev. B.A.M. Luttikhuis did not think this proposal went far enough. He wanted synod to declare that the November decision had been a bad one. Many delegates agreed. Luttikhuis' proposal was adopted by the executive and later by a large majority of delegates.

Twenty-five delegates opposed the motion, and one promised a flood of letters on the issue at the next synod.

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Church

(In)Security

Wayne Brouwer
CHAPTER & VERSE

"Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? Are they not the ones who are slandering the noble name of him to whom you belong?" (James 2:6).

A little girl came home from Sunday School and her parents asked her about the lesson. "What was the story about today?" they said. "Well," she told them, "it was about a man who was travelling from Jerusalem to Jericho. He was beaten up by some bad men, and they threw his body into the ditch. And then two preachers came along. But when they saw that the man had already been robbed, they passed by on the other side!"

Some people think the church is always on the take, always asking for money. It's just another robber, only sanctified by the piety of religious language. Dennis the Menace, in one of the comic strips, is dragging his parents off to church on a Sunday morning. They're late and [illegible] knows it. He says: "I hope we get in our seats before they serve the money!" And we all know that the "serve" is really the "take"!

'Who? Me?!'

Whatever the wealth of the church today, James didn't have a great view of a money/religion mix. He couldn't seem to believe that wealthy people could belong to God or the church!

Of course, we're quick to point out the sociological changes that have taken place since his days, and the fact that upper middle class folk, as well as rich people, have done a world of good in the church and kingdom with their money. We'd be quick to tell James that his comments were for the godless rich of his day, and that we use our financial resources in a different way. But, as Shakespeare said, through Hamlet, "The lady doth protest too much, methinks!" The Bride of Christ may find her fiscal welfare changed, since James' days, and perhaps more than she would care to admit, her spiritual outlook along with it.

What makes money so important to us? It has to do with security, and our perceptions of it. Said Don Marquis, "There is nothing so habit-forming as money!" Researchers say that the major concern of college and university students, all across the board, is getting the right education to land the right job in order to make the right amount of money. Because money is perceived of as power and security. The more you have of it, the more you have of them.

Someone tells the story of a pair of bikers on a two-seater bike, pedalling along a highway. They came to a steep hill. Panting and groaning, they finally made it to the top.

"What a climb!" said the one when they stopped for a rest break.

"Yeah!" said the other. "And if I hadn't kept the brake on, we would have slid right down again!"

And that's often a picture of us, racing through life. We puff up the ladder of success, earning more and more, but holding onto the brake because we're scared what might happen if we'd ever let go!

How much security do you need?!

I remember sitting with a fellow one day at a coffee shop. I was new in town, and he wanted to sell me some life insurance.

"How much security do you want?" he asked me. He'd been a wheeler-dealer in Calgary, big money, fast times. Then it all fell apart around him. Now he was back in his home town, trying to start over.

"How much security can you offer?" I asked. His eyes lit up. His face got flushed. He was ready to move in for the deal. But then we started talking about the church. You see, he had another agenda tucked behind his tycoon come-on. Did I really believe all this religion stuff? Could God really love him, after all he'd done, after the mess he'd made of things? He'd been on the fast track: bright lights, big city. He wanted desperately to be loved, but one marriage was gone, and another relationship was souring. Money bought him nothing. Was there something more?

Who owns whom?

Security. We all look for it. We think we can find it in money, in wealth, in possessions. And, maybe, for a while, it works.

But one day Jesus comes along, like he did that day in Jericho when he met Zachaeus. And when he tells us that he loves us, and when he tells us that his father is taking care of us, we can let our grabbing fists go, and ease the pain of our ulcers, and give away the possessions that have begun to possess us.

Ernest Hemingway used to give away some of his most valuable possessions at the beginning of each new year. He said he did it to prove that he really owned them, and not the other way around. If he couldn't give them away, they owned him. They controlled his heart.

And that brings us back to James' words. Why is he so hard on the rich? For the same reason Jesus was. Everybody can get into the Kingdom of God. It's just harder when you don't think you need it.

Wayne Brouwer is senior pastor at Handerwyk Christian Reformed Church in Holland, Mich.

One gospel, many cultures focus of new global study

TORONTO, (CCC) — Canadian churches are joining a global study of "gospel and cultures" organized by the World Council of Churches, and are seeking stories from across Canada.

Materials prepared for the Canadian portion of the study state that "at the heart of the Christian faith lies the affirmation that 'the Word became flesh.' The universal love of God, revealed in Jesus Christ through the power of the Spirit, manifests itself in particular contexts and through particular cultures."

A WCC study paper says culture carries the rich heritage of peoples and the values that shape their identities. "Religion is an essential element of culture. Culture is the medium in and through which the gospel is received, experienced, affirmed and proclaimed," says the document.

The co-ordinator of the Canadian project is Rev. Ted Reeve of the Centre for the Study of Religion in Canada, Emmanuel College.

"We are looking for stories, case studies and examples of churches or groups that highlight these and other areas of Canadian experience," Reeve says. The steering committee is asking Canadian church people to contribute stories, case studies, and other examples from their experience that illustrate how our understanding of, and witness to, the gospel has been shaped by the Canadian culture in which we live. This includes reflections on the role of the gospel in situations where the identity of people is denied by political, social and economic forces.

Eventually, the study will look into the question of whether or how we can find a common language or framework within which mutual understanding, communication and accountability are possible among churches in widely different cultures.

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Feature

Pre-synod advice 1

Let's combat the spirit of independentism

In the next four issues of Christian Courier we hope to present articles that anticipate the meeting of the 1995 Synod of the Christian Reformed Church. The articles are by Rem Kooistra, George VanderVelde, Paul Schrootenboer and Anthony Looy.

Rem Kooistra

God made us not to be *in-dependent*, free from the influence of others, but he made us to be *inter-dependent*; that is, to live in a community in which we influence each other and depend upon each other. That is not to say that God does not want us to have a measure of self-determination and self-reliance. But how often do we not see these virtues turn into vices?

Not very long ago a young minister was heard to say: "I don't care what the church says. I will do my own thing."

There was another minister at one time who thought he had the exclusive control of the membership of his congregation. If he did not like a certain member, he would send this person his or her membership papers with the advice: "Please, find yourself another church."

Again it was a minister who decided that some of his colleagues could not preach from "his" pulpit.

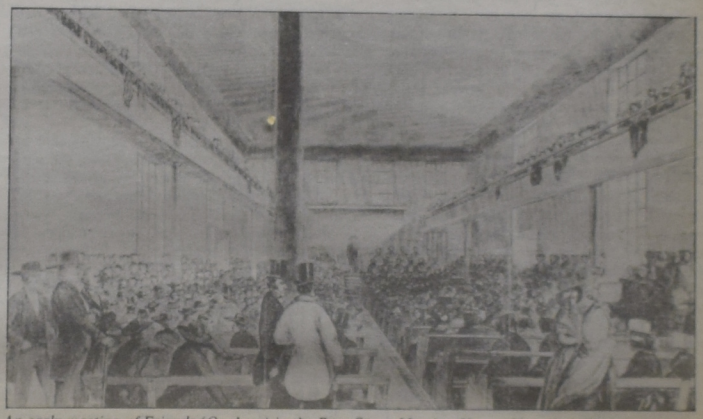
These are examples of an independent spirit. It seems to me that this spirit is getting stronger in many of our churches. It is happening not only in Christian Reformed churches but in other denominations as well. It's somewhat understandable, since the world to which we belong has a history of seeking independence, politically, financially and last but not least, ecclesiastically. In addition, we have all been infected to some extent by the virus of individualism.

No rules

What promotes this independentism? One thing is our liturgical freedom. There was a time that a worship service in the Christian Reformed Church was predictable, but this is no longer the case. Some Christian Reformed churches who follow the example of some Mennonite congregations hold two worship services on Sunday morning — one is called "traditional" and the other "contemporary."

A United Church minister once said to me: "In the United Church we have no rules." One time when I attended a service in the People's Church of Toronto, a glass of water was knocked off the pulpit, and the minister made the *ad rem* remark: "You see, in the People's Church anything goes!"

Yes, such is our practice born from a history of independence (the U.S. is proud of its Declaration of Independence). The historical background in North America differs from that of Europe. We are die-hard individualists.



An early meeting of Friends (Quakers) in the Ross Street Meeting House, New York City.

Under whose authority?

When in 1892 the *Gereformeerde Kerken* (the Reformed Churches) in the Netherlands became a new denomination, the plural form of *kerk* (church) was chosen, in distinction from the existing Dutch Reformed Church. The intent was to indicate that each congregation was a local church, representing the body of Christ. But it certainly was not the aim of Dr. Abraham Kuyper and his followers to promote *in-dependence* instead of *inter-dependence*.

But after a schism in the *Gereformeerde Kerken* in 1944, the spirit of independence threatened the Article 31 churches when they tried to have every synodical decision "ratified" by each individual consistory. This could have become a way to unrestricted congregationalism.

In a recent *Banner* article on mega-churches Rev. William Lenters remarked: "The chief shortfall and possible downfall of the denominationally independent mega-church is that the church and its chief pastor are under no one's authority and answer to nobody." He charged that mega-churches "are able to toss aside tradition."

In 1951, while I was still in the Netherlands, I became a minister of a mega-church: the church of *Den Haag-West*. It was a church of 10,000 members served by nine ministers. (In Canada the largest mega-church boasts "only" 2,557 members!) But there was no way that we as pastors were allowed to do "our own thing." We were very much inter-dependent.

The rise of congregationalism

How and where did this independentism originate? You might answer that this sin, too, was born in Paradise. Adam and Eve thought that it would be fine to be independent from their heavenly Father.

But in the history of the church the spirit of independence rises up whenever the official church disappoints. In England, after a partial reformation was brought in by King Henry VIII, dissenters became Puritans. Their independent spirit rejected "the interference of bishops, presbyteries, or any other form of ecclesiastical hierarchy" (J. William T. Youngs in *The Congregationalists*). The Puritans formed diverse religious organizations, such as the Congregationalists, the Quakers, the Baptists and the Presbyterians of New England. Their noble goal was to establish the Kingdom of God on earth.

But because of their loose organization congregationalist churches often fell apart. This led to new schisms and to loss of coherence. On the other hand, we must acknowledge that the congregationalist were often a great blessing in promoting true Christian living.

One of my dear friends is very much afraid that independentism is the danger that threatens the Christian Reformed Church and other churches as well. Together with many others I plead for unity. With the editor of *The Banner*, the Rev. John Suk, I say: "Say no to schism!"

But I know that the unity can be preserved only if we practice a good measure of tolerance. Tolerance is the medicine which will promote a healthy spirit of interdependence among today's church people.

The Pilgrims, who were English Puritans, landed on Plymouth Rock on December 21, 1620.

Dr. Rem Kooistra is a retired pastor of the Christian Reformed Church. He lives in Waterloo, Ont.

Features

My Mother's Hands

Thin lines run down my mother's hands;
folded, they lie upon her breast.
She lies there, quiet, frail.
Her life is slowly fading away.

From her bedside I watch her
sleeping and then awake.
How are you? *I say*
Het gaat wel, mijn kind.
My mother's hands reach out, ever so slowly,
to touch my cold hands.
Hers are warm, soft, thin.

She speaks to me about her life.
She knows so well it will soon end.
There is serenity in her quiet gentle voice.
The Lord is calling me home.
I know that my Redeemer lives.

My mother's hands are still holding mine.
Her eyes close.
She's finished speaking for a while.
I watch her.

Back through the years I wander.
I see her and remember.
My mother's hands are loving,
comforting, sharing, caring.
Those hands are busy.
I see her kneeling on the hard linoleum floor,
scrubbing, cleaning.
Those hands carry treasured memories.

I bend closer now.
I ask if she's asleep.
No my child, I am still here waiting for my Savior.
And then when I believe she may be asleep,
I think this cannot be.
I cannot comprehend it all.
My mother will be leaving me.
She whose heart and hands have given me so much.

I marvel at her peacefulness,
her longing to be at home eternally.
Until we meet again, *she says.*
Her life does not belong to me.
She knows that her Redeemer lives.
My mother's hands are folded now
their earthly task is finished.
My mother's hands shared love with us.
Her words are a gift
that lingers on and comforts me.
Thank you, Jesus, for showing me
your death and resurrection are reality.

Nelly Ellens Baarda
Beamsville, Ont.

A letter from a grateful daughter

Dear Mom,

I just came back from a nice visit with you. In about a month you will be celebrating your 80th birthday. That makes me realize that you are aging: you sometimes need a walker; you often complain about pain; and during our visit you asked me questions you've asked before. That started me thinking about your earlier life and what I remember of you in *my* early life.

You were born in the Netherlands into a family that did not know the love of Jesus. You were made aware of the presence of the devil through superstition. Your mother died when you were two and a half years old leaving your father with nine children, one younger than you. Life with your father was difficult. He was self-employed but went bankrupt in a risky venture, causing much anger and stress.

At age 14 you went to work for a farm family — Christians. They took you to church with them and you went to catechism. I remember you telling me that while preparing meals and washing dishes you would prop your catechism book on the window sill and learn the questions and answers. You enjoyed learning them.

You met Dad during that time and married him when you were 21. Your father didn't approve. A good year later I, your oldest daughter, was born. You and I were baptized on the same day. Dad and you had six more children.

Time for the children

My earliest recollection of you is being together in a snow house we had built. It was dark outside, warm and cozy inside. A candle burned and you gave us a

slice of bread and a little butter. How wonderful one slice of bread could taste.

When the war started we had to evacuate; the area was being flooded. Our belongings were loaded onto wagons and cattle were everywhere. It was so exciting, but you were crying. I just could not understand why.

I remember you teaching us how to knit. We had the measles. When we started feeling better but were not yet able to go outside you figured it was an opportune time to teach us this necessary skill. Some years later, after school, we had to knit "tien toeren" (ten rows). My two girlfriends would join us, and while we knitted, you would read to us.

One night I had a terrible earache and I remember you kneeling beside the bed and asking the Lord to take my pain away. I remember also the times you were sitting behind the sewing machine. Always wanting us to look our best, even with limited resources, you made me a jacket from an old brown coat. Since, after the war, you were unable to buy buttons for the jacket, you embroidered "buttons."

God's leading

Mom, I give thanks to the Lord for leading you to him, for establishing a God-fearing home, and for giving you a love for singing and reciting songs of praise to him. You, who never experienced a mother's love, are a caring and loving mother.

Were you a perfect mother? Of course not. I am not a perfect daughter, either. Do you remember when I had started Grade 1 and you would not allow me to do something I wanted to do, that I said to you "*Stik dan*" ("Go ahead, suffocate!")?

You asked me if I knew what would happen if someone suffocated. Well, I didn't, so you let it go at that.

How precious to know that we have a heavenly Father who blesses that which is good and forgives what is not good.

Praise to him for his marvellous grace — which includes knowing that we need mothers.

Much love,
Meike

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Agriculture

Biotechnology: miracle or monster?

Agricultural beekeeping

Maynard VanderGalien

Maynard VanderGalien

No matter what you think about modern biotechnology, it's here to stay and we had all better get acquainted with it. That was the consensus of most of the participants at a recent one-day workshop I attended on Biotechnology Creation Stewardship. The workshop was the last of 18 sponsored by the Christian Farmers of Ontario (CFFO). Participants included farmers and agricultural writers. It was good to have six area high school students in attendance as well.

Skepticism

An 82-year-old participant had reservations about gene manipulation and said a heavy reliance on biotechnology will lead to more power for multinational corporations and a push toward monoculture. But an 18-year-old student thinks biotechnology is one way to feed the world's growing population.

Jim Romahn of Kitchener, Ont., an award-winning farm writer, and Bill van Geest, an environmental consultant, were the facilitators at all the workshops. Romahn and van Geest wrote columns for *Calvinist Contact* in the 1980s, so it was a pleasure meeting them.

Romahn took the workshop participants through a short course in genetics, explaining that each gene, of which there are 100,000 in each human chromosome, is a chemical boss which orders the production of one specific enzyme. Romahn explained how 99 per cent of all genes are common to animal and plant life. So it's possible to move a gene from one animal to another. If a growth gene, for example, is moved from a rat to a mouse, the mouse would grow to rat size.

Romahn stunned the participants when explaining how wheat genes, mixed with tiny bits of gold dust, are transferred into other wheat cells by blasting them with a 22 calibre rifle. That, apparently, is the only successful way to transfer the genes. To get a hardier variety of alfalfa that survives very cold winter conditions, scientists can move a gene from an Arctic char (fish) to an alfalfa plant.

A local CFFO member told the group his son attends veterinary college and often says it's scary what he is being taught.

Pigs with human content

It *is* scary. Recently pigs with both human and swine blood types were bred by a Japanese research team, possibly paving the way for pig organs to be transplanted to humans. Researchers at the Nagoya University said they put the genes from an enzyme that makes human blood into fertilized pig ova, resulting in offspring whose blood included a human type.

A strain of canola has been developed that is resistant to herbicides. A new type of corn has been bred that can produce its own insecticide. Baccillus thuriegensis kills corn rootworm and the European corn bore. It cuts up the intestines of the worms.

A famous biotechnology example is the Flavr-Savr tomato which can be picked and shipped ripe; it lasts longer and tastes better than green-picked tomatoes.

There is also wheat that is resistant to leaf disease, a scourge that causes an estimated worldwide yield loss of 200 million bushels a year.

Proceed with caution

The potential for gene manipulation is enormous. But is it the monster some think it is? Is biotechnology really so special — so different from other changes in technology? Not really. I can remember when my father used artificial insemination (AI) on our dairy cows in the late 1950s. It was scorned by neighboring farmers. They said masturbating bulls to collect semen would cause abnormalities in cattle because AI is not a natural process. We all know how successful AI has been in developing better animals. Just last week a local beekeeper told me Canada is importing bee semen from Europe so we can breed a bee that is resistant to mites that are destroying our bees.

At the end of the CFFO workshop, van Geest asked the participants to develop a CFFO response to biotechnology that is to be circulated to governments and to the farm community. All agreed that biotechnology should "proceed with caution."

Too bad so few people from the Reformed community attended the workshop.

Maynard Vander Galien farms in the Ottawa Valley in Renfrew, Ont.

Christian farmers group wants government help

GUELPH, Ont. (CFFO) — The Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario (CFFO) is calling on the federal and provincial governments to cooperate in creating a grants and tax credit program for farmers willing to undertake projects to benefit the environment.

"We have a duty to sustain the creation's fruitfulness and to uphold the creation's powerful testimony to our Creator," explained John Markus, CFFO's president. "On the practical side, that means dealing with the substantial capital investments required to reduce possible environmental risks."

Recently, CFFO's provincial board gave its endorsement to a statement which calls for both levels of government to cooperate in creating for Ontario farmers an environmental grants and tax credit program of at least $25 million per year.

To show its commitment to such a program, the federation says it approves the redirection of five per cent of the existing farm property tax rebate funding (about $8.5 million) into the program. Both levels of government would match that with new funding, for a total of $25 million per year.

Grants for major investments

"Part of the motivation for this program came from farmers participating in Environmental Farm Plan workshops," said Markus. "It was soon discovered through the EFP process that in order to reduce environmental risk on some farms, substantial capital investments were needed. And those kinds of investment generally have more direct benefit to the public than they do to the farm family."

CFFO says that capital grants of between 40 and 60 per cent should be available for capital investments designed to reduce the risk of environmental degradation. This would include items like manure storage, fencing of streams, water management structures and milkhouse waste management.

The federation proposal, structured along the lines of the present Clean Up Rural Beaches program (CURB), calls for every farm enterprise to be eligible for a maximum of $50,000 (grants and credits) during the next 10-year period.

CFFO says that farm businesses should be able to contribute their share of the project through their labor and other in-kind contributions. Also included in the statement is a call for a 10 per cent investment tax credit for the farm business share of capital investments undertaken to benefit the environment and for which it can be demonstrated that society received the primary benefit.

Increase 'small potatoes'

Finally, CFFO says that an expansion should take place in the small grants program now in place for projects identified in the action plans of Environmental Farm Plans. The federation says small grants should be increased from $500 to $1,000 and that every farm enterprise should be eligible once every three years for a rebate on projects undertaken.

Farm organizations would play a significant role in the design and delivery of these programs, according to the CFFO proposal.

"We see farm organizations establishing what is eligible for grants or credits," said John Deelstra, CFFO's vice-president. "In addition, farm organizations would help design evaluation criteria for what benefits society and what benefits farm businesses. They would also deliver the small grants program."

Manitoba farmer makes hoes for northern gardens

WINNIPEG, Man. (MCC) — Gardeners in northern Canadian communities share a common frustration — they can't find dependable garden hoes suitable for heavy clay soil.

When George Voth, a Manitoba farmer, heard about the problem four years ago he did something about it.

Voth, a grain and oil seeds producer farming at Marquette, 50 kilometres west of Winnipeg, designed a sturdy grub hoe which is distributed to aboriginal communities through the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Native Gardening Program.

Voth describes the large heavy duty hoe as a combined hoe and ice pick. Similar hoes are used in Paraguay and other countries but aren't readily available in Canada where hoes are designed for prime agriculture land.

"It didn't need to be high tech — just more solid than what you buy in the stores," explains Voth, who has donated about 60 hoes to the MCC gardening program.

The hoes are used by summer volunteers participating in the Native Gardening Program, an MCC program started 18 years ago to assist Canadian Native people with planting and maintaining local gardens. The hoes remain in the community when the gardening project is completed.

Around a dozen people will be serving as gardeners in the program this summer.

Two Canadians among finalists for Dordt presidency

SIOUX CENTER, Iowa (DC) — Two Canadians are among the three finalists for the presidency of Dordt College named by the college board of trustees. The finalists are Lee Hollaar of Aldergrove, B.C., Harry Fernhout of Toronto and Carl Zylstra of Orange City, Iowa. The candidates will return to campus next fall for a series of interviews with the board, faculty and students. The board will make the final appointment in October 1995. The appointee will take office in the summer of 1996 following the retirement of current president Dr. John B. Hulst.

Dr. LeRoy (Lee) Hollaar currently serves as education co-ordinator for the Society of Christian Schools in British Columbia. Hollaar's graduate work includes a master's degree in educational administration from the University of South Dakota in 1971, a master's degree in Christian studies from Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Mich., in 1986, and a doctoral degree in educational administration from the University of Alberta in 1989.

Hollaar has served in various administrative positions: as principal of Volga Christian School, Volga, S.D., Ireton Christian School, Ireton, Iowa, Mt. Vernon Christian School, Mt. Vernon, Wash.; and in the Edmonton Christian schools, Edmonton.

From 1986-1988 Hollaar was director of development for the Edmonton Christian schools. Related professional positions include serving as president of the Christian School Administrators' Association and president of the Alberta Christian School Administrators' Association. Hollaar has also held adjunct faculty positions at Seattle Pacific University and Trinity Western University.

Graduate of Dordt

Dr. Harry Fernhout is currently president of the Institute for Christian Studies (ICS) in Toronto. A graduate of Dordt College, Fernhout received a master's degree in philosophy from the ICS in 1975, and a master's degree in education from the University of Toronto in 1982. His doctoral degree in the philo hy of education is also from the University of Toronto.

Prior to his appointment to the ICS presidency in 1989, Fernhout served the ICS as a senior member in the philosophy of education and vice-president for academic affairs. He is also an associate member of the graduate faculty in the School of Graduate Studies at the University of Toronto.

Fernhout has authored two books, *Promises Broken: Promise Kept* and *Of Kings and Prophets*, and numerous academic articles.

Dr. Carl Zylstra, currently serving as pastor of Immanuel Christian Reformed Church in Orange City, Iowa, is a graduate of Calvin College and Theological Seminary. He received his doctoral degree from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1983. Zylstra's background includes serving as pastor of Hammond Christian Reformed Church, Hammond, Indiana, from 1973-1979 and as a lecturer in practical theology at Calvin Theological Seminary from 1982-1983.

Zylstra has also served in various denominational, ecumenical and civic positions. He is past president of the board of Christian Reformed World Missions and vice-president of the Board of World Ministries of the Christian Reformed Church.

Currently Zylstra serves as a member of the board of trustees of Calvin Theological Seminary and in several roles for his community and area schools.

Indiana Jones, Jurassic Park and... Calvin College?

Phil de Haan

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — Although movies like *Indiana Jones* and *Jurassic Park* have done much to add a little visibility (and sex appeal) to the work of archaeologists, the discipline remains one which has not been accessible to most college and university undergraduates, particularly in Christian institutions.

That will soon change. A recent decision by the faculty senate at Calvin College implements a new minor in archaeology, making Calvin one of just three institutions in Michigan to offer either a major or minor in archaeology.

Calvin College professor of history Bert DeVries is on the "archaeology minor committee" and is excited about the new offering. "A lot of high school students have an interest in archaeology," he says, "but it sort of tapers off when they get to college. It's exciting to think that Calvin can be a place where that enthusiasm is encouraged and developed. I speak to a lot of junior high school students about archaeology and they're fascinated by it. They can't get enough of it."

DeVries, an avid long-distance runner, has been at Calvin since 1967 and during that stint has spent the equivalent of 12 years doing field work in Jordan. He will draw on that vast experience in teaching two archaeology courses at Calvin — an introduction and a more advanced field work course. The latter will likely take students to Umm el-Jimal (on the fringe of the desert in northern Jordan) for summer 1996 field work; it also may involve digs in western Michigan.

"Over the past century archaeology has played an extremely significant role in the expansion of knowledge and understanding of the material side of human culture. It's an important discipline in which a school like Calvin should take a leading role."

Hollywood brought it to the public

Although the bespectacled DeVries hates the stereotypical images of archaeologists like Indiana Jones ("I never wanted to be known as an Indiana Jones," he says with a smile), he does acknowledge the role Hollywood has played in bringing one of his lifelong loves to greater public consciousness.

"The movies have made people more aware of archaeology," he says, "but they're trash, particularly the Indiana Jones movies. It's just not archaeology in any sense of the word."

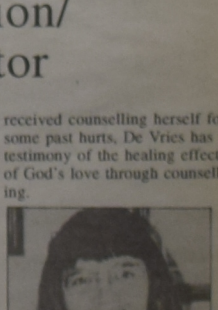
DeVries does acknowledge, however, the excitement of archaeology. "A find can be an alluring thing," he says, "a real adrenaline rush. But it's not all glamor and treasure hunting. There is a lot of painstaking, boring work that takes place on a dig. That's one of the things that our students will find out. That doesn't mean we're trying to discourage them or steer them away from archaeology. It just means that they'll be getting a realistic picture."

Salem appoints promotion/ development co-ordinator

CC Staff

Salem Christian Counselling Services has appointed Joan De Vries to the new half-time position of promotion/development co-ordinator. In this capacity, De Vries initially will be busy updating brochures, developing a larger membership base, establishing Salem contact people in congregations of a Reformed persuasion, and meeting with various individuals and groups to promote Salem and its services.

Her background includes an English teaching degree from Dordt College, followed by various teaching positions in Calgary, Vancouver, Ottawa, and most recently, at Hamilton District Christian High. As well, De Vries has done some graduate level work towards an MEd in counselling at both the University of Ottawa and at the Institute for Christian Studies. This course work included a supervised time as a counsellor in a public school. Having also received counselling herself for some past hurts, De Vries has a testimony of the healing effects of God's love through counselling.



Joan DeVries: former student returns as a teacher

C.C. FILES

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For a brochure please contact: Institute for Christian Studies, 229 College Street, Toronto, Ontario, M5T 1R4, (416) 979-2331, FAX: (416) 979-2332

For our calendar of events, please turn to page 19.

Classifieds

Classified Rates

(Revised February 1, 1995)

Births	$25.00
Marriages & Engagements	$40.00
Anniversaries	$45.00
2-column anniversaries	$90.00
Obituaries	$45.00
Notes of thanks	$35.00
Birthdays	$40.00

All other one-column classified advertisements: $15.00 per column inch. NOTE: Minimum fee is $15.00. Letter under file number $35.00 extra. Photos: $25.00 additional charge.

Note: All rates shown above are GST inclusive

ATTENTION!

a) *Christian Courier* reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format.

b) A sheet with information about an obituary sent by funeral homes is *not* acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion.

c) Photographs sent by fax *are not* acceptable. If you wish a photo included, send us the original.

d) *Christian Courier* will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements.

e) The rate shown above for classifieds covers any length up to five column inches. *Christian Courier* reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of $15.00 per column inch (GST incl.).

NEWLYWEDS & NEW PARENTS

We offer a one-year subscription for only $25.00 (GST incl.) to the couples whose wedding is announced in the *Christian Courier* and to the parents of the child whose birth announcement appears in our paper. To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request the wedding or birth announcement to enclose $25.00 and the couple's correct address.

Christian Courier
4-261 Martindale Rd.
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1
Phone: (905) 682-8311
Fax: (905) 682-8313

Births

VOS:

We, George and Sharon, thank God for entrusting to our care a healthy baby daughter

CHRISTINA SHARON

Christina was born on April 13, 1995, and weighed 7 lbs., 11 oz.

A sister for Jacqueline and Julie.

Proud grandparents are Peter and Jane Van Duyvenvoorde of Beamsville, Ont., and George and Frances Vos of Smithville, Ont.

Home address: 206 St. Catharines, St., Smithville, ON L0R 2A0

Marriages

KNIGHT/BAKKER:

"Glorify the Lord with me. Let us exalt His name together" (Ps. 34:3). It is with great joy and pleasure that Keith and Marian Knight announce the marriage of their eldest daughter

ERIKA KRISTIN

to

JONATHAN DAVID

eldest son of Thede and Gertrude Bakker of Winnipeg, Man.

The Lord willing, the wedding celebration will take place on Saturday, June 3, 1995, in Wallaceburg, Ont., Rev. D.C. Los, grandfather of Erika, will officiate.

Their wedding day also marks the 45th anniversary of Rev. Dirk and Alice Los. We praise God for He is faithful from generation to generation.

Future address: 2219 Smith St., Apt. 3, Regina, SK S4P 2P5

MARISSEN/VELDHUIS:

Mr. and Mrs. Jake Marissen of Georgetown, Ont., are pleased to announce the forthcoming marriage of their daughter

NICOLE MONIQUE

to

JAMES HENRY VELDHUIS

son of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Veldhuis of Ancaster, Ont.

They will make their promise to each other on June 10, 1995, at 3:30 p.m. in the Church in the Woods, Waterloo, Ont.

Future address: Waterloo, Ont.

Anniversaries

1940 May 17 1995

With praise and thanksgiving to our heavenly Father we would like to announce the 55th anniversary of our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents

MARTEN and ANTJE KINGMA
(nee PETERKAMP)

It is our hope and prayer that the Lord will continue to surround them with his love and bless them as they have truly been a blessing to us.

Jitske & Geert Horinga — Port Colborne, Ont.
Bertha Vander Heide — Ilderton, Ont.
Shirley & Piet Stol — Kerwood, Ont.
Marten & Nellie Kingma — London, Ont.
Gerben Kingma — Strathroy, Ont.
Bert & Diana Kingma — Stoney Creek, Ont.
Andrew & Joanne Kingma — Ilderton, Ont.

26 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren. Open house at Trillium Village, 400 Dominion St., Strathroy, Ont., on Saturday, May 20, 1995, from 2-4 p.m. No gifts please.

Home address: 400 Dominion Street, Apt. 7, Strathroy, ON N7G 3G8

Anniversaries

1950 June 1 1995

With thanksgiving and praise to our heavenly Father, we hope to celebrate the 45th wedding anniversary of our dear parents, grandparents and great-grandparents,

REV. DIRK and ALICE LOS
(nee BOTER)

We thank you for being such a good example of a loving, Christian marriage and for always being there for us. May God richly bless you in the years to come.

Mom and Dad will also celebrate 45 years of service to God in the ministry. They are still active in this work in the Listowel Chr. Ref. Church.

To celebrate these anniversaries, an open house will be held on Saturday, June 10, 1995, D.V., from 2-4 p.m., in Bethel Chr. Ref. Church, Elizabeth Street, Listowel, Ont.

Best wishes only.

Their loving children:

Marian & Keith Knight — Wallaceburg, Ont.
Joyce & Bart Geleynse — Inkerman, Ont.
Irene & Carel Geleynse — Flamborough, Ont.
Liesje & George Van Zwol — Hamilton, Ont.
Bill & Ingrid Los — Listowel, Ont.
Chris & Nell Los — Woodstock, Ont.

22 grandchildren and one great-grandson.

Their home address: 480 Louise Ave. W., Listowel, ON N4W 3P2

Langweer, Fr. Lucknow, Ont.

1935 May 17 1995

With joy in our hearts and thankfulness to the Lord we wish to announce the 60th wedding anniversary of our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents

ELDERT and GRACE GEERTSMA
(nee TIERSMA)

on May 17, 1995. It is our prayer that the Lord may continue to keep them in His care and bless them in years to come.

Congratulations and love from

Henk & Hermin Dyk — Blyth, Ont.
Leo & Greta Vanderley — Shelburne, Ont.
Jack & Justina Sytsma — Caledonia, Ont.
Peter & Marg Geertsma — Brunner, Ont.
Oeds & Ruth Geertsma — Lucknow, Ont.
John & Linda Geertsma — Chesley, Ont.
Jim & Marvel Geertsma — Wroxeter, Ont.
John & Mary Dykstra — Swallow Lake, Ont.
Rodney & Jane Fitzsimmians — Chesley, Ont.
John & Maureen Peet — Goderich, Ont.

Congratulations and love from 28 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Open house will be held May 20, 1995, from 3 p.m. till 5:30 p.m. at the Legion Hall, Lucknow, Ont.

Home address: Box 482, Lucknow, ON N0G 2H0

Anniversaries

Congratulations to Jack and Louise Bylsma (nee Brongen) on the occasion of their 60th wedding anniversary!

St. Annaparochie Woodstock

1935 May 29 1995

On May 29, 1995, the Lord willing, we hope to celebrate the 60th wedding anniversary of our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents

JACK and LOUISE BYLSMA
(nee BRONGEN)

We thank God for his protection and care as He spared them for us and each other. Best wishes and love from:

Corrie (Jans deceased) Bergman — Woodstock, Ont.
Tina & Henry Stienstra — Chatham, Ont.
Mike & Betty Bylsma — Woodstock, Ont.
Florence & Ben Olthoff — London, Ont.

Also 15 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren.

Home address: 110 Beale Street, Apt. 202, Woodstock, ON N4S 6X5

Anniversaries

1945 May 18 1995

With thanks and praise to God, we wish our parents

SID and DOROTHY VAN DER WILP
(nee KAMMINGA)

a joyful day as they celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary.

"Show me your ways O Lord. Teach me your paths:...for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long" (Ps.25:4).

Congratulations and love from your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren:

Gerald & Margret Roodzant — Terrace, B.C.
Dirk & Wilma Hoogendoorn — Orangeville, Ont.
Frank & Sandra VanderWilp — Brampton, Ont.
Bob & Irene Pearson — Rexdale, Ont.
Henry & Sylvia Seinen — Houston, B.C.

Home address: 10 Campbell Dr., Brampton, ON L6X 2H5

Congratulations to Eldert and Grace Geertsma (nee Tiersma) on the occasion of their 60th wedding anniversary!

Classifieds

Anniversaries

Hindelopen 1935 Grimsby May 16 1995

"Commit your ways to the Lord, trust in Him, and He will act" (Ps.37:5).

With praise and thanksgiving to our Lord we will, D.V., celebrate the 60th wedding anniversary of our parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents

UILTJE and KRISTJE SJAARDA (nee BAKKER)

Congratulations Heit and Mem, Pake and Beppe. May our Lord continue to bless and care for you.

With love from your children:
Hilly & Diedert Schilstra — St. Anns
Gay & Bob Schotanus — Fonthill
Willy & Rick Zantingh — Dunnville
Pierre & Martha Sjaarda — St. Anns
Aafke Haveman — Fruitland
Wayne & Gertie Sjaarda — Ingersoll
35 grandchildren and 42 great-grandchildren.

Open house is planned on May 16, 1995, from 2-4 p.m., at Shalom Manor, 12 Bartlett Ave., Grimsby, ON L3M 4N5

Best wishes only.

Congratulations to Uiltje and Kristje Sjaarda (nee Bakker) on the occasion of their 60th wedding anniversary !

Congratulations to Solke and Grace Vanderborgh (nee Oldenziel) on the occasion of their 60th wedding anniversary!

Wildervank 1935 Strathroy May 29 1995

It is with great joy and thankfulness to our faithful God, that we announce the 60th wedding anniversary of our dear parents, grandparents and great-grandparents

SOLKE and GRACE VANDERBORGH (nee OLDENZIEL)

We thank God for the many years of happy marriage, and for the good health with which He has blessed them during this time. Praise the Lord! May our heavenly Father continue to surround them with his grace and loving care. Love from their children:

Jean & Adrian Van Geest — Blyth, Ont.
John & Winnie VanderBorgh — Woodstock, Ont.
Herman & Marjorie VanderBorgh — Listowel, Ont.
Nettie & Jerry Kiers — Picture Butte, Alta.
Rita & Jerry Kavanaugh — Windsor, Ont.

Love also from their 17 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

An open house will be held, D.V., on Saturday, May 27, 1995, from 3-5 p.m., at Trillium Village, 400 Dominion St., Strathroy, Ont.

Best wishes only please.

Home address: 400 Dominion St., Apt. 19, Trillium Village, Strathroy, ON N7G 3G8

PRINS-VEENSTRA
1970-1995

Jack and Liz (Prins) Veenstra will be celebrating their 25th anniversary on May 22, 1995. We thank the Lord that our children, grandson, and family can share that day with us.

Shane & Glorie Veenstra
Nicholas John
Chad & Rhonda
Jeremy & Nicole
Lee

Home address: R.R. #3, Fort Saskatchewan, AB T8L 2N9

For Rent

VICTORIA, B.C.
SUITE TO SUBLET

Fully furnished downstairs suite available. May 21-July 20, 1995, in beautiful Victoria, B.C. $400 a month (neg.) incl. hydro and cable. For information please call and leave message at **(604) 744-3556.**

Beautiful **1 bedroom apartment** in private home. Furnished. Also suitable for tourists. **Fonthill, Ont. Call (905) 892-4903.**

Church News

Christian Reformed Church

Address Change:
— Rev. Dirk and Mrs. Peta Velthuizen, 28 Campion Ave., Guelph, ON N1H 5L4; effective May 15, 1995.

Obituaries

Hellendoorn the Neth. Brampton Ont.

1906 - 1995

On April 28, 1995, it pleased the Lord to take unto Himself my beloved husband, our father, grandfather and great-grandfather

JOHN (JAN) BUISMAN

at the age of 88.

"See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame" (1 Peter 2:6b).

Mrs. Florence Buisman-de Swart.
Albert & Florence Buisman — Brampton, Ont.
Tim & Mieke Buisman — Brampton, Ont.
Ed & Sjoukje (Sonja) Buisman — St. Catharines, Ont.
Hank & Ria VanZeumeren — Brampton, Ont.
Herman & Freda VanZeumeren — Gananoque, Ont.
Dick Buisman, deceased

21 grandchildren and 39 great-grandchildren.

Correspondence address: c/o A. Buisman, R.R. #2, Brampton, ON L6V 1A1

Sybrandehuis, Fr. Chatham, Ont.

March 15, 1907 - April 23, 1995

On Sunday, April 23, 1995, very peacefully, the Lord called home His child

AAFKE KLOOSTRA (DE JAGER)

Loving wife of Walter Kloostra for almost 66 years.

Dear mother of:
Sieger & Lena Kloostra — Chatham, Ont.
Dick & Grace Kloostra — Chatham, Ont.
Connie & Henk Van Rooyen — Beamsville, Ont.
Bill & Christine Kloostra — Dresden, Ont.
Joe & Henny Kloostra — Chatham, Ont.
Simon & Brenda Kloostra — Peterborough, Ont.
Walter & Correen Kloostra — Brantford, Ont.

Dear grandmother of 31 grandchildren and great-grandmother of 50 great-grandchildren.

Correspondence address: 209-40 Elm St., Chatham, ON N7M 6A5

"I love the Lord, for he has heard my voice."

On the Saturday prior to Easter 1995, at Fulton Manor in Grand Rapids, Mich., the Lord took home his child and our dear friend

HARRIET WESTERHOF

at the age of 85.

She leaves her six children and their spouses, 19 grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren, all of whom praise God for her gracious presence and imprint. You may reach us at Jack and Patricia Westerhof, Box 688, Palmerston, ON N0G 2P0.

Obituaries

At His appointed time the Lord called home His child

TJITSKE KOENEN (WOUDA)

on Tuesday, April 11, 1995, at Shalom Manor, Grimsby, Ont., in her 90th year.

Beloved wife of the late Harmen Koenen (1979).

Survived by one brother, Renze Wouda, one sister Hanne Henzen (Wouda), two brothers-in-law and one sister-in-law in the Netherlands.

Predeceased by three sisters and four brothers.

Sadly missed by Mrs. Elizabeth Wouda of Townsend, Ont.

Nieces and nephew:
Trudy & Bas Slappendel — Fenwick
Louise & Paul Burch — Simcoe
Dick & Claudette Wouda — Peterborough

Psalm 63.

Correspondence address: Mrs. E. Wouda, 76 Towncentre Dr., Townsend, ON N0A 1S0

"The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear" (Ps. 27:1a).

On April 27, 1995, the Lord called home to Himself our dearly loved Mother, Beppe, and Great-Grandmother

JACOBJE (JOAN) SWART VANDENBERG

Though we grieve her loss, we rejoice in the knowledge that her years of suffering are over, and that she is now with her Lord and Savior.

Predeceased by her husband, Simon (Sietse) in 1993, her son Pieter in 1974, and granddaughter, Sheila Bakker in 1982.

She is lovingly remembered by her children:
Jan & John Bakker — Victoria, B.C.
Thea & Harry Kingma — Edmonton, Alta.
Bob & Joan Swart — Rocky Mountain House, Alta.
Anne & Cor Visser — Vernon, B.C.
Tina & Dan Pelech — Vernon, B.C.
Joan & Gus Vandermeulen — Campbell River, B.C.
Ken & Rita Swart — Rocky Mountain House, Alta.
Judy & Joe Smoes — Vernon, B.C.
Mary & Ken Forster — Rocky Mountain House, Alta.

and beloved Beppe of 33 grandchildren and 40 great-grandchildren.

Funeral service was held May 3, 1995, in Vernon Chr. Ref. Church, Vernon, B.C.

Correspondence address: T. Pelech, C. 26, S. 19, R.R.6, Vernon, BC V1T 6Y5

Personal

Attention: CRC Pastors

Would you like to preach in Nova Scotia? If you're travelling/vacationing in Eastern Canada, please consider doing the **Chr. Ref. Church in Kentville, N.S.,** a big favor!

Please contact **Gerrit Tenyenhuis at (902) 538-9533.**

Classifieds

Obituaries

Bessel Van Dyk

Wapenveld, Gld. Edson, Alta.
"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints" (Ps.116:15).
On the morning of April 18, 1995, the Lord took home to be with Himself

BESSEL VAN DYK

He is survived by his dear wife, Dina, of Edson, Alta., and his children:
Hennie & Rene Moraal — Beamsville, Ont.
Ben & Barb Van Dyk — Black Creek, B.C.
Thea & Barney Stratton — Campbell River, B.C.
George & Sharon Van Dyk — Campbell River, B.C.
Alice & Jim Hinchey — Edmonton, Alta.
Harry Van Dyk — Carrot Creek, Alta.
He is also survived by 14 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren, two brothers, Albert and John, as well as two sisters, Reintje and Henny.
Funeral services took place April 21, 1995, from the Royal Canadian Legion Hall, Rev. Walter Vanderwerf officiated.
Correspondence address: Mrs. Dina Van Dyk, 6801-5th Ave., Edson, AB T7E 1M4

On April 21, 1995, the Lord took home His child and our dear mother, and Oma

JANTJE LINKER VANDEVEEN

at the age of 91 years.
Wife of the late Trijnco Linker (1983).
We thank the Lord for giving us believing parents.
Their thankful children:
Dien & Dick Van Kampen — London
Harry & Marie Linker — Strathroy
Klaas & Patsy Linker — Strathroy
Jean & Dick De Ruiter — Simcoe
John & Helen Linker — Strathroy
Ann & Jack Feddema — Strathroy
Jo-Anne & Tom Abma — Niagara Falls
Bart & Tina Linker — Strathroy
Henry & Anne Linker — Strathroy
36 grandchildren and 70 great-grandchildren.
Correspondence address: Mrs. D. Van Kampen, 100 Champlain Crescent, London, ON N5V 1H1

Job Opportunities

DORDT COLLEGE

Administrative Positions

Dordt College seeks to fill the following openings with highly qualified individuals who are committed to a Reformed, biblical perspective and educational philosophy.

Vice President for Student Affairs
Serving on the president's administrative cabinet and supervising the student affairs staff, the VPSA provides leadership for all functions of the student affairs office, including residence life, spiritual and personal counseling, co-curricular activities programming, and discipline. Ph.D. in appropriate field and significant related experience required. Send resumes and letters of inquiry by July 10 to Dr. Jasper Lesage, secretary of the VPSA Search Committee, by fax (712-722-1185), e-mail (lesage@dordt.edu) or mail, at the address below.

Computer Networking Technician
Responsible for the configuration, installation, and maintenance of the college's ethernet network. Applicants must possess a four-year degree in a computer-related field and knowledge of networking in a Novell and Unix environment. Please send resume and letter of inquiry by May 22 to David Netz, chief information officer, by fax (712-722-4498), e-mail (netz@dordt.edu) or mail, at the address below.

Dordt College is an equal opportunity employer and encourages application by women and minorities.

DORDT COLLEGE
498 4th Avenue NE • Sioux Center, Iowa 51250-1697 • 712-722-3771

Job Opportunities

National Director - Camping

Christian-based organization, with office in Burlington, Ont., is looking for a mature, qualified **National Director**, for its 9 camps across Canada.

Requirements include: experience in Christian leadership (preferable Christian camping), management experience, skills in verbal and written communication, ability to motivate a diverse group towards the same goals, creative ideas for Christian camping, a fervent call to — and love for — children and youth ministry.

The candidate should have a minimum of 2 years post-secondary education in the area of business or Christian leadership — with 5 years experience, or an equivalent of training and experience. Write us (with resume) and tell us why you feel you are capable of, and interested in, this position and expected salary.

Write: ND — Search Committee
c/o P.O. Box 85310, Burlington, ON L7R 4K5

Seeking a Pastor

First Christian Reformed Church of Chilliwack, B.C., is seeking an **ordained pastor** to serve in a team ministry. One of our pastors plans to retire, D.V., in September while our Youth Pastor is completing his first year with us. First Christian Reformed Church of Chilliwack is a growing church of some 650 souls (150 families). A church profile is available. We are located 100 km east of Vancouver.

Please write: Norman Brouwer, 46787 Portage Avenue, Chilliwack, BC V2P 7H3, Phone: (604) 792-4171.

Job Opportunities

Stewardship Officer

We seek a financial planning/gift planning advisor to the Christian community. Post-secondary degree and related experience preferred. Christian commitment, personal stewardly lifestyle, good inter-personal and public speaking skills are required. 3/4 time Sept.-May. Possibly full-time after.

Executive Secretary

This position requires superior organization and management skills as well as computer secretarial skills for dicta-typing. We are looking for a take-charge person. Half-time to evolve to full-time.

For detailed position description or explanation, call or fax, **in confidence**, to:
Christian Stewardship Services
#210-455 Spadina Ave., Toronto, ON M5S 2G8
Call: 1-800-267-8890 or
Fax: 1-416-977-4611

Miscellaneous

LITTLE EUROPE RESORT and TRAILER PARK

Bracebridge, Muskoka

Plan a successful vacation at our resort known for its Dutch hospitality. Reasonable rates for cottage rentals. Excellent for camping, swimming and fishing (ideal for group camping). "Little Europe" is located 10 km. east of Hwy. 11, on Hwy. 118 East, past the Muskoka Airport.

• No pets please • Showers available
Roel & Riet Bakema
Little Europe Resort, R.R. 3, Bracebridge, ON P1L 1X1
Phone: (705) 645-2738

Hollandse Dag in York, Ont.

Woensdag, 31 mei, 1995
"Met dankbaarheid feestvieren"
50ste herdenking: Bevrijding der Nederlanden
25ste Hollandse Dag in York

Spreker:
De heer P.W.A. Schellekens
Consul Generaal der Nederlanden
Voor verdere inlichtingen, bel **(905) 772-3695**

Classifieds

Teachers

LONDON, Ont.: The London Parental Chr. School invites beginning and experienced teachers to apply for a **possible teaching position** at the **primary level**. If you have applied earlier, please contact us again. Send a letter of application, statement of faith and resume to:

Mr. Herb Goodhoofd, Principal
LPCS
202 Clarke Road, ON N5W 5E4
We look forward to hearing from you.

LUCKNOW, Ont.: Lucknow Chr. School invites qualified applicants for a maternity leave position, **Grades 3, 4, 5,** starting in September 1995 to mid-March 1996. Applications accepted until May 30, 1995. Interested teachers direct inquiries to:

Lawrence Uyl, Principal
Lucknow & District Chr. School
Box 550, Lucknow, ON
N0G 2H0
Phone: (519) 528-2016

MAPLE RIDGE, B.C.: Haney-Pitt Meadows Chr. School is an interdenominational school, currently presenting Christian education from Kindergarten to Grade 7. In September 1995 a Middle School concept will also be implemented. We are now accepting applications for a **possible primary teaching position** for the 1995/96 school year. Please send resumes to:

Rod Berg, Principal
Haney-Pitt Meadows Chr. School
12140 203rd St.
Maple Ridge, BC V2X 4V5
Phone: (604) 465-4442
Fax: (604) 465-1685.

SMITHVILLE, Ont.: Smithville District Chr. High School requires a **half-time teacher** for a combination of French and other intermediate courses. We serve a student population of 200, coming from a strong and supportive Christian community. Please direct all inquiries and applications to the principal:

M.B. Stroobosscher
6488 Smithville Road
Smithville, ON
L0R 2A0
Phone: (905) 957-3255

WOODBRIDGE, Ont.: Toronto Distr. Chr. High School has a position open in **English**
Apply to:
Ren Siebenga, Principal
c/o Toronto Distr. Chr. High School
377 Woodbridge Avenue
Woodbridge, ON L4L 2S8
Phone: (905) 851-1772 or (416) 741-2273
Fax: (905) 851-9992

Miscellaneous

Celebrate
with your friends, relatives and family on special occasions by sending a meaningful gift to help deliver the WORD. Provide us the name and address and a celebration card will be sent.
THE BIBLE LEAGUE
P.O. Box 5037, Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8
Tel.: (905) 319-9500

Bed & Breakfast

Beautiful Niagara Falls. A pleasant 15 min. walk to the Falls. Friendly home, nice rooms. Superb breakfast. Dutch spoken. Mike & Joan Havinga
(905) 358-3534

Alton Lodges
Family resort, clean housekeeping cottages, very close to 9 miles of sandy beach, excellent golf courses, fishing and many other attractions.
For information contact:
Len & Rita Bette
459 Mosley St.,
Wasaga Beach, ON L0L 2P0
Phone: (705) 429-2420

SLP
STUDENT LOAN PROGRAM
Helping Canadian Students In Financial Need
- Interest free until graduation
- Donors to CEAF receive full tax receipt
- Large portion of loan is forgivable upon graduation
- Student must be enrolled in a Christian High School or College
- Small administration fee

CEAF Christian Economic Assistance Foundation
P.O. Box 20099
Upper James Postal Outlet
Hamilton, Ontario
L8C 7M3
Tel. & Fax (905) 389-2670

For Rent

Smithville, Ont.: Starting this summer, **2 bedroom basement apartment**, good for two adults; $550 per month; stove, fridge, utilities included. No smoking, no pets. For more information call **Mrs. M.A. Buist, (905) 957-2596**

Personal

ONE TO ANOTHER
Christian companion magazine. Hundreds of readers Canada-wide. Single issue $5.
Write to:
#302, 1502-2nd Ave. S.
Lethbridge, AB T1J 4A2

Summer Job Market

Student with theatre major, theology major, philosophy minor **seeking employment in Hamilton, Toronto** or **elsewhere in Golden Horseshoe.** I have: extensive computer experience; high research competence; solid writing/journalistic ability; good people skills. Experience includes: teaching assistant, tutor, researcher, writer/editor, data entry, sound technician, word processor, sales clerk. **Winston Neutel (905) 521-0297.**

Events

Parkview Meadows Retirement Village

72 Town Centre Drive, Townsend, ON - (519) 587-2447

invites you to attend our

Open House

on Saturday, May 13, 1995, from 1-4 p.m.
Refreshments-Guided Tours

- 1 bedroom self-contained apartment available.
- Retirement bedsitting units with private bathroom, meals & staff on duty 24 hours.
- A carefree adult lifestyle emphasizing security, independence, privacy and fellowship.
- Amenities include: hobby/exercise rooms, library, hair salon, attractive lounges, tuck shop, transportation, co-ordination, social activities, banking service, shuffleboard & much more.

Miscellaneous

Huntley's Used Christian Books

We buy and sell used Christian books and libraries.
Open Tues. - Sat. 114 Lake St., St. Catharines, ON L2R 5X8
(905) 988-9223

Manager of Major Donor Accounts

Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC)

The Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA), is seeking applicants for the position of **Manager of Major Donor Accounts in the Resource Development Department of CRWRC — U.S.** The qualified individual must be a creative, energetic, self-starter with management, organizational and interpersonal skills in the area of marketing and fundraising. The responsibilities include the income generation from present and prospective major donor accounts for CRWRC — U.S.

A bachelor's degree preferred; three to four years demonstrated experience in fund development and/or marketing in a for profit or non-profit environment; strong interpersonal skills required.

A detailed job description is available upon request. For consideration, please submit a copy of your resume and a letter stating your interest by **May 26, 1995.**

Director of Personnel
Christian Reformed Church in North America
2850 Kalamazoo Ave. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49560-0500
(616) 247-5881/Fax (616) 246-0834

Classifieds/Events

Events	Events	Events	Events	Events

25th ANNIVERSARRY REUNION
BEACON CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL

St. Catharines, Ont.

To commemorate this occasion Beacon is organizing festivities during the weekend of

August 19, 1995

We invite former students, teachers, friends and supporters to join us!

For more information contact Beacon at
2 O'Malley Drive, St. Catharines, ON L2N 6N7
Fax: (905) 937-1130 or phone
Fran Versluis-Koole at (905) 934-5761

Summer Job Market

Gardening, parent relief, landscaping, office, tutoring, library — **siblings, 16 and 20,** have experience, will work hard. **David and Roxanne Rupke (905) 851-7636.**

18-year-old female looking for full-time summer employment. Has experience in working with children, hoeing and picking cucumbers, but is willing to do much more. **Tamara Bosma, R.R. 5, Hagersville, ON N0A 1H0, (905) 768-3546.**

Calendar of Events

May 13 Seventh annual "Springfest," hosted by the Calvin Chr. School, from 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m., Dundas Community Centre, King & Market, **Dundas**, Ont. A fun day for the entire family! Admission free. Info.: (519) 647-2569.

May 19 "The Royal Male Choir Mastreechter Staar" in concert at the Nepean Centrepoint Theatre, **Nepean**, Ont. Info.: (613)224-7756.

May 19-21 "Reformed Engaged Encounter," an opportunity for couples contemplating engagement or Christian marriage, at Crieff Hills Retreat Centre, **Guelph**, Ont. Info.: (905) 935-6875.

May 20 Ottawa's Dutch community will break ground for a $3 million windmill which will stand as a permanent memorial to Canada's role in liberating the Netherlands. The "Canadian Tulip Festival" will be from May 17-22. Info.: (613) 224-7756.

May 20 "W.W.II Veterans Appreciation Day," **Picture Butte**, Alta. Info.: (403) 732-4380.

May 20 Organ concert by Jennifer VanderVegte-Van Amerongen, 8 p.m., Can. Ref. Church, **Beamsville**, Ont. Freewill offering.

May 20 Dedication of fountain in remembrance of the 1945 liberation donated by the Dutch community of **Goderich**, Ont., and surrounding area. Parade leaving at 1:30 p.m. from Legion to the Cenotaph, with fountain dedication following. Music by various bands. Info.: (519) 524-7280.

May 26 Concert by the "Koninklijke Nederlandse Militaire Kapel," 8 p.m., Alumni Hall, U. of W. Ont., **London**, Ont. Info.: (519) 661-0453.

May 27 "Annual ABC Sale," 9 a.m.-1 p.m., at Shalom Manor, **Grimsby**, Ont. Breakfast from 8-10 a.m., lunch from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Plants, flowers, crafts, toys, bake table and much more. Everyone welcome!

May 27 "Dutch Day" in **Dundas**, Ont., with special food and entertainment. Concert at 7:30 p.m. in the Dundas Arena by the "Koninklijke Nederlandse Militaire Kapel." Info.: (905) 383-9477.

May 31 "Hollandse Dag" (25th!) at CRC, **York**, Ont. Commemoration of the liberation of the Netherlands. Speaker: Mr. P.W.A. Schellekens, Consul-General of the Netherlands. Info.: (905) 772-3695.

June 4 Dutch worship service led by Rev. Riemer Praamsma, 3 p.m., CRC, **Ancaster**, Ont.

June 5 The "Royal Brass Quintet" in concert, 8 p.m., Redeemer College auditorium, **Ancaster**, Ont. Info./tickets (905) 648-2131.

June 5-9 "Milk & Honey Summer Festival," a week-long festival of fun, fellowship and learning, at Redeemer College, **Ancaster**, Ont. Info. & registration: Janet Katerberg (905) 648-2131, ext. 225.

June 8 Concert by the "Choir Besorah," sponsored by the "Evangelische Omroep," Hilversum, the Neth. At 8 p.m., Redeemer College auditorium, **Ancaster**, Ont. Info./tickets John VanderLaan (905) 648-6585, or at the door.

June 9-10 25th Anniversary celebrations of the Chatham Chr. High School, **Chatham**, Ont. Info.: Wendy Horneman, phone/fax (519) 352-9298.

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News

Three projects keep Kitchener church and school supporters hopping

Jim Romahn

KITCHENER, Ont. — Christians in Kitchener, Ont., are busy building this year.

First Christian Reformed Church is building a $1.4 million church at Westmount and Bleams roads in the southwest corner of Kitchener.

Many of the same people are helping with $460,000 worth of additions and renovations, featuring a gymnasium, for Laurentian Hills Christian School at Westmount Road and Laurentian Drive.

And some of the same people are involved in a $78,000 project to install a wooden floor in the gym at Woodland Christian High School at Breslau, on the eastern edge of Kitchener. First Christian Reformed Church Kitchener is worshipping at the high school while its new church is under construction, and because parking was scarce, picked up half of the $7,500 tab to expand the parking lot in January.

PHOTO COURTESY JIM ROMAHN

Raising rafters for the roof of the First CRC are (l. to r.) Bill Cave, John Middlejans and Gerald Damsma.

Valuable labor donations

Schiedel Construction Incorporated is project manager for both the Laurentian Hills and First CRC projects. Phil Schiedel, one of the family members who owns that business, is a prominent member in both the church and school.

"We work as a contractor and project manager, and for a fixed fee," Schiedel said. "That allows the owner (the school or church board) to have control of where things are."

Donated labor has been a big factor in both projects. School board chair Ron DeRuyter said about 20 volunteers turned out on six Saturdays to help tear out walls, shovel dirt, move concrete-anchored playground equipment, install the foundation and help pour concrete floors.

Labor donations for the school actually began several years ago when volunteers helped Ralph Van Dyke build a home that was sold. That project raised more than $35,000.

Van Dyke, John Middlejans and Henry Bouwers, all experienced builders, have been co-ordinating and directing volunteer labor at the church, including installation of the foundations in January and erecting the walls and ceiling.

"We've had about $75,000 worth of labor donated so far," says Middlejans. About 20 volunteers have turned out on many Saturdays, including one in February when about 20 others were pouring concrete floors at Laurentian school and another two dozen volunteers were building skids as a fund-raising project for Woodland.

First CRC Kitchener has many construction tradespeople among its members — carpenters, plumbers, painters, electricians, landscape architects and contractors. They provide leadership for those who lack training and expertise but are willing workers.

One of the steadiest volunteers, Herb Bremer, hasn't hammered any nails or shovelled any dirt.

"I'm too old to be able to do that," says Bremer. What he does provide is loaves of his famous fruit bread, loaded with raisins and currants.

Big challenge

The members of First CRC realize they have taken on a heavy triple load of work and debt, but there were compelling reasons for each project.

Woodland, which draws 165 students from Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge, Guelph, Drayton, Listowel and Stratford, has wanted a wooden floor since the gymnasium was first built.

Schiedel, who is chair of the property committee at Laurentian Christian School, said the supporters there "felt we would suffer severely in the future if we aren't able to provide complete facilities," including a gymnasium.

And First CRC Kitchener has been searching for a space solution for at least 10 years. Among the options that were considered were a major renovation and addition to the Ottawa Street site, starting a daughter church, or splitting into two equal halves.

"It's going to be nice to have everything and everybody back together in one place," says Claire Elgersma, chair of the committee that's managing the entire church project, including planning, design, financing and construction.

Laurentian school's gym and kitchen were ready by spring. Woodland's floor will be installed during August and First CRC hopes to begin worshipping in its new sanctuary by mid-summer.

Lost son found after 42 years

Robert VanderVennen

WELLAND, Ont. — "It's a miracle," says Maria Hartgers, an 82-year-old widow living in Welland, Ont., and a member of Grace Christian Reformed Church there. The week before Easter she received news that her son in Indonesia from her first marriage, whom she had lost track of 42 years ago, was doing well and eager to make contact with her.

Maria had married Robert Hardy in Indonesia, but he died at sea during the Second World War. Robert Hardy's brother and sister-in-law helped her raise her son, Wilfred. When some time later Maria married Hank Hartgers, she and her new husband decided to leave Indonesia and start a new life in Uruguay, South America. Wilfred chose to stay in Indonesia with his uncle and aunt.

COURTESY ROBERT VANDERVENNEN

Maria Hartgers (l.) with Lina Sukmawan

Because of several moves, Maria and her son lost track of each other. After 22 years in Uruguay, unrest and civil war caused Hank and Maria Hartgers to move to Ontario, where Hank's sister lives. In 1991 Hank died and Maria was widowed again.

Yearning to reconnect

Loneliness set in and Maria began to yearn for Wilfred, wondering if she would ever see or hear from her son again. She talked about this with Hank's sister, Ann Baarda, who lives in Pickering. Together they began the search. The contacted every Indonesian organization they could think of.

One Sunday, about two years ago, Lina Sukmawan of Mississauga, Ont., visited the Indonesian church in Willowdale, Ont., and saw a flyer asking for help in locating Wilfred. After about two years of phoning and writing, Lina found someone in St. Catharines, Ont., who knew a Hardy in the Netherlands who had moved there from Indonesia. That turned out to be Wilfred's uncle and aunt.

Wilfred Hardy, now 59, had been hoping and praying to hear something of his mother some day. Overjoyed to discover that his mother was still alive, though now halfway around the world from him, he sent a copy of his birth certificate and other documents to show that he was the person Lina was looking for.

COURTESY LINA SUKMAWAN

Wilfred Hardy as a boy

Now they want to see each other, of course. "If I had the money, I'd go to Indonesia tomorrow," says Maria. Wilfred has two teenaged children still living at home and does not have the money to make the trip either. But friends in Scarborough and Willowdale have started a fundraising project to help Wilfred pay for a plane ticket to Canada.

Anyone who wants to help their dream come true can contact Ann Baarda at (416) 287-2490, send a cheque to her address at 85 Fishery Rd., Scarborough, ON M1C 4H5 or deposit money at any branch of the Royal Bank towards the Willy Hardy Fund, account number 5016779.